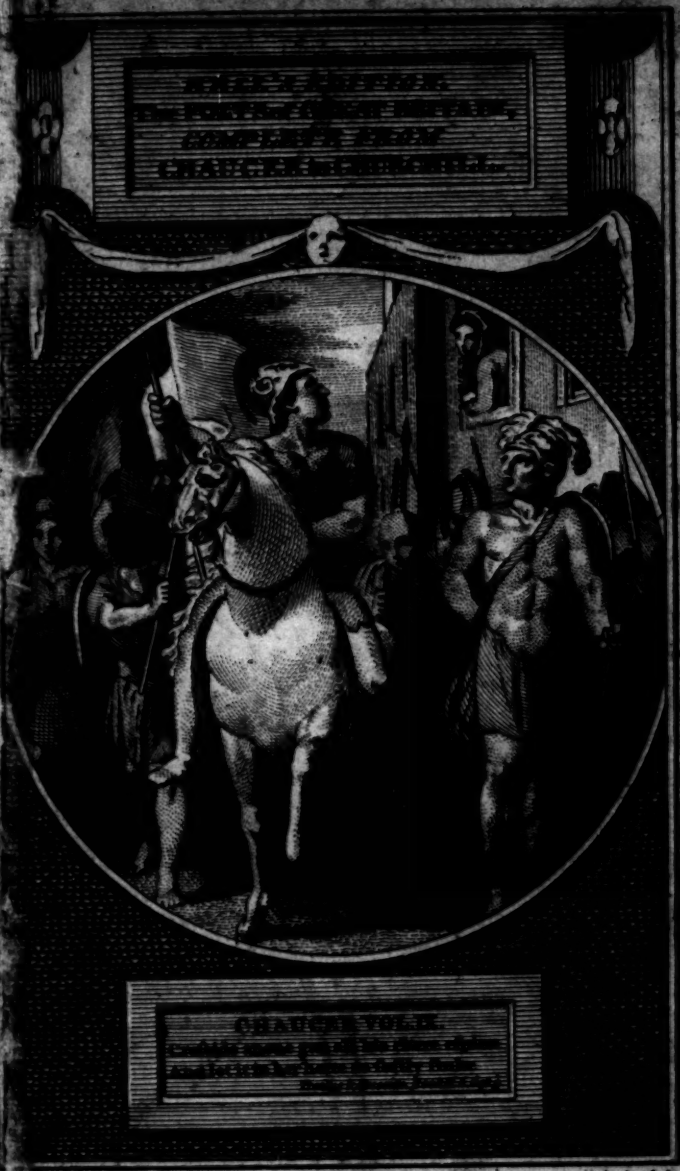

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THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFF. CHAUCER.

IN FOURTEEN VOLUMES.

THE MISCELLANEOUS PIECES

From *Urry's* Edition 1721,

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From *Tyrwhitt's* Edition 1775.

Grete well CHAUCER whan ye mete----
Of ditees and of songes glade,
The which he---made,
The londe fullfilled is over all. GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER---chiefe poete of Bretayne----
Whom all this londe schulde of ryght preferre,
Sith of our langage he was the lode-sterre----
That made first to dystylle and rayne
The gold dewe droppes of speche and eloquence
Into our tunge through his excellence. LYDGATE.

The honour of English tong is dede----
My mayster CHAUCER, floure of eloquence,
Mirrour of fructuous entendement,
Universel fadir in science----
This londis verray tresour and richesse----
The firste fynder of our fayre langage. OCCLEVE.

Venerabill CHAUCER, principall poete but pere,
Hevinly trumpet, orlege and regulere,
In eloquence balme, condict and diall,
Mylky fountane, clere strand, and rois riall,
Of fresche endite throw Albioun iland braid. DOUGLAS.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rethouris all,
As in oure toung flour imperial
That raise in Brittane evir, quha reidis right
Thou beiris of Makers the triumphs royall,
The fresche enamilt termes celestiall:
This mater couth haif illuminit full bricht,
Was thou nocht, of our Inglis all the light,
Surmounting every toung terrestriall
As far as Mayi's morrow dois midnight. DUNBAR.

VOL. IX.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.

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From Urry's Edition 1721.

THE CANTERBURY TALES

From Tyrwhitt's Edition 1775.

Great well CHAUCER, whan ye made----
Of dittes and of longes glade,
The which he----made,
The lande fulfilled is over all.

GOWER.

My maister CHAUCER----chiefe poete of Britayne----
Whom all this lande lokede of right prefere,
Sith of our language he was the lode-stere----
That made first to rhyme and rede
The gold dew dropes of speche and eloquence
Into our tonge through his excellence.

LYDGATE.

The honour of [illegible] lande----
My maister CHAUCER, [illegible] eloquence,
Mirror of [illegible],
Universal light in [illegible],
This lode-star [illegible]----
The [illegible]

OCCLEVE.

Venerable CHAUCER, [illegible] poet but peere,
Heroick vertues, [illegible] and regiere,
In eloquence balme, [illegible] and dew,
Mighty fountane, [illegible], and [illegible],
Of [illegible] and [illegible] blood.

DUNBAR.

O reverend CHAUCER! rose of rhetoure all,
As is your name your fame [illegible]
That rais in Britain [illegible] ay, quha redis aright,
Your buirs of alegeis [illegible] triumphe royall,
[illegible] chaunt across [illegible],
[illegible] master death hall triumphit [illegible],
[illegible] of our knight in all the flight,
[illegible] every thing [illegible]
As far as [illegible] morrow doth midnight.

DUNBAR.

VOL. IX.

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

MDCCC. LXXXI.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

GEOFFREY CHAUCER.

VOL. IX.

CONTAINING HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, *viz.*

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

But natheles certain
I can right now no thrifty Tale fain,
But CHAUCER, (though he can but lewedly
On metres and on riming craftily)
Hath fayd hem in fwiche Englifh as he can
Of olde time, as knoweth many a man;
And if he have not fayd hem, leve brother,
In o book, he hath fayd hem in another----
Who fo that wol his large Volume feke. TALES, *ver.* 4465.

Dan CHAUCER, well of Englifh undefil'd,
On Fame's eternal bead-roll worthy to be fil'd----
Old Dan Geffrey, in whofe gentle fpright
The pure well-head of poetry did dwell----
He whilft he lived was the foveraigne head
Of fhepherds all-------. SPENSER.

Old CHAUCER, like the morning ftar,
To us difcovers day from far;
His light thofe mifts and clouds diffolv'd
Which our dark nation long involv'd;
But he defcending to the fhades
Darknefs again the age invades. DENHAM.

CHAUCER, him who firft with harmony inform'd
The language of our fathers---His legends blithe
He fang of love or knighthood, or the wiles
Of homely life, thro' each eftate and age
The fafhions and the follies of the world
With cunning hand portraying-----
Him who in times------
Dark and untaught began with charming verfe
To tame the rudenefs of his native land. AKENSIDE.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Prefs, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1782.

MISCELLANIES.

TROILUS AND CRESEIDE.

IN FIVE BOKES.

PROŒMIUM LIBRI TERTII.

O Blisfull light! of whiche the bemis clere
Adornith allè the third hevin faire,
O sonn'is life! o Jov'is doughtir dere!
Plesaunce of love! o godely debonaire!
In gentle hertes aie redy to repaire,
O very cause of hele and of gladnesse,
Iheried be thy might and thy godenesse! 7

In heven and hell, in yerth and the salt se,
Is felt thy might, if that I well discerne,
As man, brid, beste, fishe, herbe, and grenè tre,
Thei fele in timis with vapour eterne:
God lovith, and to love he woll naught werne;
And in this worldè no liv'is creture
Withoutin love is wroucht or maie endure. 14

Ye, Jovis, first to thilke affectis glade,
Through whiche that thingis livin all and be,
Commendidin and amorous him made
On mortall thing, and as ye list aie ye
Yeve him in love ese or adversite,
And in a thousande formis doune him sent
For love in yerth, and whom you list he hent. 21

52

Ye fiers Mars, apesin of his ire,
And as you lift ye makin hertis digne,
Algatis them that ye woll set a fire
Thei dredin shame, and vicis thei resigne;
Ye doen 'hem curteis be, freshe, and benigne,
And hie or lowe aftir a wight entendeth
The joyis that he hath your might it sendeth. 28

Ye holdin reigne and house in unite,
Ye sothfast cause of frendship ben also;
Ye knowin all thilke covered qualite
Of thingis whiche that folke on wondrin so
Whan thei can nat construe how it maie go
She lovith him, or why he lovith here,
As why this fishe nat that comith to were. 35

Ye folke a lawe have set in universe,
And this knowe I by them that lovirs be,
That who so strivith with you hath the werse:
Now ladie bright, for thy benignite,
At reverence of them that servin the,
Whose clerke I am, so techith me divise
Some joie of that is felt in thy service: 42

Ye in my nakid hert is sentiment
Inhilde, and doe me shewe of thy swetenesse,
Caliope! thy voice be now present,
For now is nede; seest thou nat my distresse
How I mote tell anon right the gladnesse
Of Troilus to Venus herying? 48
To whiche gladnesse who nede hath God him bring!

Explicit proœmium.

INCIPIT LIBER TERTIUS.

LAIE all this mene while this sad Troilus
Recording his lesson in this manere,
Mafeie, thought he, thus woll I saie and thus,
Thus woll I plain unto my ladie dere,
That worde is gode, and this shall be my chere,
This n'ill I nat foryetin in no wise:
God leve him werkin as he can devise. 56

And, Lorde! so that his herte began to quappe
Hering her come, and short gan for to sike;
And Pandarus, that ledde her by the lappe,
Came nere, and gan in at the curtein pike,
And saied, God doe bote on all that are sike!
Se who is here you comin to visite;
Lo! here is she that is your deth to wite. 63

Therwith it semid as he wept almoste.
A a! quod Troilus, so routhfully,
Where me be wo o mightie God! thou woste:
Who is all there I se nat truily.
Sir, (quod Creseide) it is Pandare and I.
Ye, swete herte, alas! I maie nat rise
To knele, and doe you honour in some wise. 70

And dressid him upward; and she right tho
Gan both her hondis soft upon him leie.
O, for the love of God doe ye not so
To me! (quod she.) Ey, what is this to sei!
Sir, comen' am I to you for eaussis twei,
First you to thonke, and of your lordshipe eke
Continuaunce I wouldè you beseke. 77

This Troilus, that herd his ladie praie
Of lordſhip, him woxe neithir quick ne dedde,
Ne might o worde for ſhame unto it ſaie,
Although, men ſhouldin ſmitin of his hedde,
But, Lorde! ſo he woxe ſodainliche alle redde;
And, Sir, his leſſon that he wendè conne
To prayin her is through his wit ironne. 84

Creſeide all this eſpyid well inough,
For ſhe was wiſe, and loved him ner the laſſe,
All n'ere he' in all aperte, or made it tough,
Or was to bolde to ſing a ſol'is maſſe;
But whan his ſhame began ſomwhat to paſſe
His reſons, as I maie my rimis holde,
I woll you tell as techin bokis olde. 91

In chaungid voice, right for his very drede,
Whiche voice eke quoke, and therto his manere
Godelie abaſh't, and now his hewis rede
Now pale, unto Creſeide his ladie dere,
With loke doune caſt and humble yoldin chere,
Lo the aldir firſt worde that him aſterte
Was twyis, Mercie, mercie, my dere herte! 98

And ſtint a while, and whan he might out bring
The nextè word, was, God wote for I have
As faithfully as I have had konning
Ben your'is all, God ſo my ſoulè ſave,
And ſhall, till that I wofull wight be grave,
And though I dare ne can unto you plain
Iwis I ſuffir not the laſſè pain. 105

Thus mocht as now, oh womanliche wife!
I maie out bring, and if this you displese
That shall I wreke upon mine owne life
Right sone I trowe, and doe your herte an ese,
If with my deth your hart I maie apese;
But sens that ye han herd me somwhat sey
Now retche I nevir how sone that I deie. 112

Therwith his manly sorowe to beholde
It might have made an herte of stone to rew,
And Pandare wept as he to watir would,
And pokid evir his nece newe and newe,
And sayid, Wo begon ben hertis true;
For love of God make of this thing an ende,
Or slea us both at ones er that ye wende. 119

I, what? (quod she.) By God and by my trouth
I n'ot nevir what ye wilne that I seie.
Eie! what? (quod he) that ye have on him routh
For Godd'is love, and doeth him nat to deie.
Now than thus, (quod she) I wollin him preie
To tellin me the fine of his entente;
Yet wist I nevir well what that he mente. 126

What that I mene, o my swete herte dere!
(Quod Troilus) o godely freshe and fre!
That with the stremis of your eyin clere
Ye wouldin somtime frendly on me se,
And than agrein that I maie ben he
Withoutin braunche of vice on any wise
In trouthe alwaie to do you my servise, 133

As to my ladie right, and chese resort,
With all my witte and all my diligence,
And I to have right as you list comfort,
Under your yerde egall to mine offence,
As deth, if that I brekin your defence,
And that ye digne me so mochil honour
Me to commaundin aught in any hour, 140

And I to ben your very humble, true,
Secrete, and in my painis pacient,
And evir to desirin freshly newe
To servin, and ben aie like diligent,
And with gode herte all wholly your talent
Recevin in gre, how sore that me smerte:
Lo, this mene I, o mine owne swetè herte! 147

(Quod Pandarus) Lo! here an hard request,
And reso'nable a ladie for to werne;
Now necè mine, by Natall Jov'is fest,
Were I a god ye shouldin sterve as yerne,
That herin well this man wol nothing yerne
But your honor, and sene him almoste sterve,
And ben so lothe to suffre him you to serve. 154

With that she gan her eyin on him cast
Full esily and full debonairly,
Avising her, and hied her not to fast
With ner a worde, but saied him softily,
Mine honour safe I woll well truily,
And in soche forme as ye can now devise,
Recevin him fully to my servise; 161

Beseching him, for Godd's love, that he
Would in honour of trouth and gentillnesse,
As I well mene, eke menin well to me,
And mine honour with wit and businesse
Aie kepe; and if I maie doen him gladnesse
From hennisforthe iwis I n'ill not laine;
Now bethe all whole, no lengir ye ne plain. 168

But nathelesse this warne I you, (quod he,)
A king's sonne although ye be iwis,
Yet ye shall no more have soveraine
Of me in love than right in that case is,
Ne n'ill I forbere if ye doen amis
To wrathin you, and while that ye me serve
Cherishe you right aftir that ye deserve. 175

And shortily, dere herte, and all my knight!
Beth glad, and drawith you to lustinesse,
And I shall truely, with all my full might,
Your bittir tourin all to swetinesse,
If I be she that maie do you gladnesse;
For every wo ye shall recovir blisse,
And him in armis toke, and gan him kisse. 182

Fill Pandarus on knees, and up his eyen
To hevin threwe, and helde his hondis hie;
Immortall god! (quod he) that maiest not dien,
Cupide, of this thou maist the glorifie,
And Venus, thou maist makin melodie:
Withoutin honde me semith that in toune
For this miracle I here eche bell soune. 189

But ho! no more now of this ilke matere;
For why? this folke woll comin up anone
That have the lettir redde; lo! I hem here;
But I conjure the Creseide anone,
And thou to Troilus, whan thou maist gone,
That at mine house ye hen at my warning,
For I full well shall shapin your comming; 196

And esith there your hertis right inough,
And let se whiche of you shall bere the bell
To speke of love, and right therwith he lough,
For there have ye a leisir for to tell.
(Quod Troilus) How long shall I here dwell
Er this be doen? Quod he, When thou maiest rise.
This thing shall be right as you list devise. 203

With that Helen and also Deiphobus
Tho comin upward, right at the staire's ende,
And, Lorde! so tho gan gronin Troilus,
His brothir and his sustir for to blende.
(Quod Pandarus) It time is that we wende;
Take, necè mine, your leve at them all thre,
And let 'hem speke, and comith forth with me. 210

She toke her leve at 'hem full thriftily,
As she well could, and thei her reverence
Unto the full ydiddin hertily,
And wondir well spekin in her absence
Of her, in praising of her excellence,
Her govirnaunce, her wit, and her manere
Commendidin, that it joie was to here. 217

Now let her wende unto her ownè place,
And tournin we to Troilus againe,
That gan full lightly of the lettir pace
That Deiphobus had in the gardine faine,
And of Helen and of him he would feine
Delivirid hen, and faied that him left
To slepe, and aftir talis have a rest. 224

Helen him kist, and toke her leve as blive;
Deiphobus eke, and home went every wight,
And Pandarus as faste as he maie drive
To Troilus tho came as linè right,
And on a paillet all that gladè night
By Troilus he laie with merie chere,
And well was them that thei werin yfere. 231

Whan every wight was voidid but thei two,
And all the doris werin fast ishet,
To tell in short, withoutin wordis mo,
This Pandarus withoutin any let
Up rose, and on his bedd'is side him set,
And gan to spekin in a sobir wise
To Troilus as I shall you devise. 238

Mine aldirleviſt Lorde, and brothir dere!
God wot and thou that it sate me so sore
Whan I the sawe so languishing to yere
For love, of whiche thy wo woxe alwaie more,
That I with all my might and all my lore
Have ever sithin doen my businesse
To bringin the to joie out of distresse; 245

And have it brought to soche plite as thou wost,
So that through me thou stendist now in waie
To farin well, I saie it for no bost;
And wost thou why? but shame it is to saie,
For the have I begon a game to plaie
Whiche that I nevir doen shall est for other,
Altho he were a thousande fold my brother; 252

That is to saie, for the am I become,
Betwixin game and ernest, soche a mene
As makin women unto men to come,
All saie I nat, thou wost well what I mene,
For the have I my nece, of vicis clene,
So fully made thy gentillnesse to trist
That all shall ben right as thy selfin list. 259

But God, that all wotteth, take I to witnesse
That nevir this for covetise I wrought,
But onely for to abredge that distresse
For whiche well nie thou deydist, as me thought;
But, gode brothir, doith now as the ought
For Godd'is love, and kepe her out of blame,
Sins thou art wise, and save alwaie her name: 266

For wel thou woste the name as yet of her
Emonges the peple as (who saieth) halowed is,
For that man is unbore, I dare well swere,
That evir wist that she yet did amis;
But wo is me that I that cause all this
Maie thinkin that she is my nece dere,
And I her eme, and traitour eke isere. 273

And wer it wist that I through mine engine
Had in my nece iput this fantasie
To doen thy lust, and wholly to be thine,
Why, all the worlde wouldin upon it crie,
And sayin that I the worst trecherie
Did in this case that evir was begon,
And she fordon, and thou right nought iwon. 280

Wherefore er I woll ferthir gone or paas
Yet efte I the beseche and fully saie
That privite go with us in this caas,
That is to saine, that thou us nevir wraie;
And be not wrothe though I the oftin praie
To holdin secre soche an high matter,
For skilfull is (thou woste well) my praier. 287

And thinke what wo there hath betid er this
For making of avauntis, as men rede,
And what mischaunce in this worlde yet there is
Fro daie to daie right for that wickid dede,
For whiche these wise clerkis that ben dede
Have evir this proverbid to us young,
That *The first vertue is to kepe the toung*. 294

And n'ere it that I wilne as now abredge
Diffusion of speche, I could almoste
A thousande olde stories the aledge
Of women loste through false and fol'is boste;
Proverbis canst thy self inow, and woste
Ayenist that vice for to ben a blabbe
All saied men sothe, as oftin as thei gabbe. 301

O tongue, alas! so oftin here before
Hast thou made many' a ladie bright of hewe
Saied, Welawaie the daie that I was bore!
And many' a maidins sorowe for to newe;
And for the more parte all is but untrue
That men of yelpe and it wer brought to preve;
Of kindè none avauntour is to leve. 308

Avauntour and a lier all is one;
As thus; I suppose a woman graunt me
Her love, and saieth that othir woll she none,
And I am sworne to holdin it secre,
And aftir I goe tell it two or thre;
Iwis I am a vauntour at the lest,
And lier eke, for I breke my behest. 315

Now lokith than if thei be not to blame
Soche manir folk, what shal I clepe 'hem, what?
That 'hem avaunt of women, and by name,
That yet behight 'hem nevir this ne that,
Ne knowin 'hem no more than mine olde hat:
No wondir is, so God me sendin hele,
Though women dredin with us men to dele. 322

I saie nat this for no mistrust of you,
Ne for no wise men, but for folis nice,
And for the harme that in the worlde is now
As well for folie oft as for malice,
For well wote I that in wise folke that vice
No woman drat, if she be well avised,
For *Wise men ben by folis harme chastised.* 329

But now to purpose, levè brothir dere!
Have all this thing that I have saied in minde,
And kepe the close, and be now of gode chere;
For all thy daies thou shalt me true yfinde;
I shall thy processe set in soche a kinde,
And God toforne, that it shall the suffise,
For it shall be right as thou wolt devise. 336

For well I wote thou menist well parde,
Therefore I dare this fully undirtake;
Thou wost eke what thy ladie grauntid the,
And daie is set the charteris to make:
Have now gode night, I maie no lengir wake,
And bid for me, sith thou art now in blisse,
That God me sendè deth or sonè lisse. 343

Who might ytellin halfe the joie or feste
Whiche that the soule of Troilus tho felte!
Hering the' effect of Pandarus beheste
His oldè wo, that made his herte to swelt,
Gan tho for joie to wastin and to melt,
And all the reheting of his sikes sore
At onis fled, he felt of 'hem no more; 350

But right so as these holtes and these hayis
That han in wintir dedde yben and drie
Revestin 'hem in grene whan that Maie is,
Whan every lustie beste listith to pleie,
Right in that selfin wise, sothe for to seie,
Woxe sodainly his hertè full of joie,
That gladdir was there nevir man in Troie; 357

And gan his loke on Pandarus up caſt
Full ſobirly, and frendly on to ſe,
And ſayid, Frende, in Aprilis the laſt,
As well thou woſt, if it remembir the,
How nigh the deth for wo thou foundè me,
And how thou diddiſt all thy buſineſſe
To knowe of me the cauſe of my diſtreſſe; 364
Thou woſt how long I it forbare to ſaie
To the that art the man that I beſt triſt,
And perill none was to the to bewraie,
That wiſt I well; but tell me if the liſt,
Sith I ſo lothe was that thy ſelf it wiſt,
How durſt I mo tellin of this matere
That quake now tho no wight maie us here? 371
But nathèleſſe, by that God I the ſwere,
That as him liſt maie all this world governe,
And if I lie Achilles with his ſpere
Mine hertè cleve, all were my life eterne,
As I am mortall, if I late or yerne
Would it bewraie, or durſt, or ſhould, or conne,
For all the gode that God made undir ſonne; 378
That rathir die I would and determine,
As thinkith me now, ſtockid in priſoun,
In wretchidneſſe, in filthe, and in vermine,
Captife to cruill King Agamemnoun;
And this in all the templis of this toun,
Upon the goddis all, I woll the ſwere,
To morowe daie, if that the likith here. 385

And that thou haſt ſo moche idoen for me
That I ne maie it nevirmore deſerve.
This knowe I well, all might I now for the
A thouſande timis on a morowe ſterve;
I can no more but that I woll the ſerve
Right as thine own ſlave, whithir ſo thou wende,
For evirmore unto my liv'is ende. 392

But here with al mine herte I the beſeche
That nevir in me thou deme ſoche folie,
As I ſhall ſainè, me thought by thy ſpeche,
That this whiche thou me doeſt for companie
I ſhould wenin it were a baudèrie;
I am not wode all if I leude ybe:
It is nat ſo, that wote I well parde. 399

But he that goeth for gold or for richeſſe
On ſoche meſſagis, call him what ye liſt,
And this that thou doeſt, call it gentilneſſe,
Compaſſion, and felowſhip, and triſt,
Departin it ſo, for widewhere is wiſt
How that there is diverſite requered
Betwixin thingis like, as I have lered. 406

And that thou knowe I ne thinke not ne wene
That this ſervice a ſhame be or a jape,
I have my fairè ſuſtir Polyxene,
Caſſandra', Helen, or any of the frape,
Be ſhe nevir ſo faire or well iſhape,
Tell me whiche thou wilt of everichone
To have for thine, and let me than alone. 413

But sith that thou hast doen me this service
My life to save, and for non hope of mede,
So for the love of God this grete emprise
Performe it out, for now is the moste nede;
For high and lowe, withoutin any drede,
I woll alwaie thine hestis allè kepe:
Have now gode night, and let us bothè slepe. 426

Thus helde 'hem eche of othir well apaied,
That all the worlde ne might it bet amende,
And on the morowe, whan thei were araied
Eche to his ownè nedis gan entende;
But Troilus, though as the fire he brende
For sharpe desire of hope and of plesaunce,
He not forgate his gode wise govirnaunce; 427

But in himself with manhode gan restrain
Eche rakill dede and eche unbridlid chère,
That all tho that livin, sothe for to saine,
Ne should have wiste by worde or by manere
What that he ment as touching this matere,
From every wight as ferre as is the cloud,
He was so wise, and wel dissimu'len coud. 434

And all the while whiche that I now devise
This was his life, with all his fullè might,
By daie he was in Mart'is high service,
That is to sain, in armis as a knight,
And fore the more part all the longè night
He lay and thought how that he might yserve
His ladie beste, her thanke for to deserve. 441

N'ill I not ſwerin, although he laie ſoft,
That in his thought he n'as ſomwhat diſeſed,
Ne that he tournid on his pillowes oft,
And would of that him miſſid have ben eſed;
But in ſoche caſe men be nat alwaie pleſed
For aught I wotè, no more than was he,
That can I deme of poſſibilite. 448

But certain is, to purpoſe for to go,
That in this while, as writtin is in geſte,
He ſawe his ladie ſomtime, and alſo
She with him ſpake whan that ſhe durſt and leſte,
And by ther both aviſe, as was the beſte,
Appoinctidin full warely in this nede,
So as thei durſt, how thei wouldin procede. 455

But it was ſpokin in ſo ſhort a wiſe,
In ſoche awaite alwaie, and in ſoche fere,
Leſt any wight devinin or deviſe
Would of 'hem two, or to it laie an ere,
That all this worlde ſo leſe to 'hem ne were
As that Cupido would 'hem his grace ſende
To makin of ther purpoſe right an ende. 462

But thilkè little that thei ſpake or wrought
His wiſè ghoſte toke aie of all ſoche hede,
It ſemid her he wiſtè what ſhe thought
Withoutin worde, ſo that it was no nede
To bid him aught to doen or aught forbede,
For which ſhe thought that love, al come it late,
Of allè joie had openid her the yate. 469

And ſhortly to this proceſſe for to pace,
So well his werke and wordis he beſet
That he ſo full ſtode in his ladie's grace
That twentie thouſande timis er ſhe let
She thonkid God ſhe evir with him met;
So could he him governe in ſoche ſervice
That all the worlde ne might it bet deviſe: 476

For why? ſhe founde him ſo diſcrete in all,
So ſecrete, and eke of ſoche obeiſaunce,
That well ſhe felt he was to her a wall
Of ſteele, and ſhelde from every diſpleſaunce,
That to yben in his gode govirnaunce,
So wiſe he was, ſhe was no more afered,
I mene as ferre as it ought ben requered. 483

And Pandarus to quicke alwaie the fire
Was evir ilike preſt and diligent;
To eſe his frende was ſet al his deſire;
He ſhove aie on; he to and fro was ſent,
He lettirs bare whan Troilus was abſent,
That nevir man as in his frend'is nede
Ne bare him bet than he withoutin drede. 490

But now para'venture ſome man waitin wold
That every worde or ſonde, or loke or chere,
Of Troilus that I rehercin ſhold,
In al this while unto his lady dere,
I trowe it were a long thing for to here,
Or of what wight that ſtonte in ſuche diſtointe
His wordis al or every loke to pointe. 497

Forſothe I have not herde it done er this
In ſtorie none, ne no man here I wene,
And though I would yet I could not iwis,
For there was ſome epiſtel 'hem betwene
That would (as ſaith min auctor) wel contene
Nie halfe this boke, of which him liſt not write;
How ſhould I than a line of it endite? 504

But to the gret effecte than ſaie I thus,
That ſtonding in concorde and in quiete
This ilkè two, Creſeide and Troilus,
As I have tolde, and in this timè ſwete,
Save onely oſtin mightin thei not mete,
Ne leiſir have ther ſpechis to fulfell,
That it befil right as I ſhal you tell, 511

That Pandarus, that evir did his might
Right for the fine that I ſhal ſpeke of here,
As for to bringin to his houſe ſome night
His fairè nece and Troilus ifere,
Where as at leiſir al this high matere
Touching her love were at the ful up bounde,
Had out of doute a time to it yfounde: 518

For he with grete deliberacion
Had every thing that therto might availe
Forne caſt, and put in execution,
And neithir lefte for coſte ne for travaile;
Come if 'hem liſte 'hem ſhouldè nothing faile,
And for to ben in aught eſpyid there
That wiſte he wel an impoſſible were. 525

And dredelesse it clere was in the winde
Of every pie and every letgame,
Now al is wel, for al the world is blinde
In this matir bothe fremid and tame;
This timbir is al redy up to frame;
Us lackith naught but that we wetin wold
A certaine houre in whiche she comin shold. 532

And Troilus, that al this purveiaunce
Knew at the ful, and waitid on it aie,
And hereupon eke made gret ordinaunce,
And founde his cause and therwith his aray,
Yf that he were ymissid night or day,
There while he was aboutin this service,
That he was gon to don his sacrifice, 539

And muste at suche a temple alone wake,
Answerid of Apollo for to be,
And first to sene the holy laurir quake
Er that Apollo spake out of the tre,
To tellin him whan Grekis next should fle;
And forthy let him no man, God forbede!
But praie Apollo helpin in this nede. 546

Now is there litill more for to be done
But Pandare up, and, shortly for to saine,
Right sone upon the chaunging of the mone,
Whan lightlesse is the world a night or twaine,
And that the welkin shope him for to raine,
He streight amorowe unto his nece went,
Ye have wel herde the fine of his entente. 553

Whan he was comen' he gan anon to plaie,
As he was wont, and of himſelfe to jape,
And finally he ſwore, and gan her ſaie
By this and that, ſhe ſhould him not eſcape,
No lengir done him aftir her to cape,
But certainly that ſhe muſt, by her leve,
Come ſoupin in his houſe with him at eve. 566

At which ſhe lough, and gan her firſt excuſe,
And ſaid, It rainith, lo! how ſhould I gone?
Let be, (quod he) ne ſtonde not thus to muſe;
This mote be don, ye ſhal come there anone,
So at the laſt herof thei fel at one,
Or ellis ſoft he ſwore her in her ere
He n'olde nevir comin there ſhe were. 567

Sone aftir this ſhe unto him gan rowne,
And aſkid him if Troilus were there?
He ſwore her Nay, for he was out of towne,
And ſaid, What, nece, I poſe that he were there,
You durſt nevir thereof have the more fere?
For rathir than men might him there aſpie
Me levir were a thouſande folde to die. 574

Naught liſt mine auctour fully to declare
What that ſhe thought whan that he ſaid her ſo,
That Troilus was out of toune ifare,
And if he ſaidè therof ſoth or no,
But that without awaite with him to go
She grauntid him, ſithe he her that beſought,
And as his nece obeyid as her ought. 581

But nathèlesse yet gan she him beseche,
Although with him to gone it was no fere,
For to beware of gosishe peplis speche,
That dremin thingis which that nevir were,
And well avisin him whom he brought there;
And said him, Eme, sens I must on you trist
Loke al be wel; I do now as you list. 588

He swore her this by stockis and by stones,
And by the goddis that in hevin dwell,
Or ellis were him levir soule and bones
With Pluto King as depè ben in hell
As Tantalus: what shouldin I more tell?
Whan al was wel he rose and toke his leve,
And she to soupir came whan it was eve, 593

With a certaine numbre of her owne men,
And with her fayir nece Antigone,
And othir of her women nine or ten;
But who was glad nowe, who, as trowyin ye?
But Troilus, that stode and might it se
Throughout a litil window in a stewe,
Ther he beshet till midnight was in mewe, 602

Unwist of every wight but of Pandare.
But to the point. Now whan that she was come
With al joie, and al her frendis in fare,
Her eme anone in armis hath her nome,
And aftir to the soupir al and some,
Whan as time was, ful softe thei 'hem yset,
God wot there was no deinte ferre to fet. 609

And aftir ſoupir gonnin thei to riſe,
At eſe wel, with hertis full freſh and glade,
And wel was him that coudè beſt deviſe
To likin her, or that her laughin made:
He ſonge, ſhe plaide; he tolde a tale of Wade;
But at the laſt, as every thing hath ende,
She toke her leve, and nedis would thens wende. 616

But, o Fortune! executrice of wierdes,
O influencis of theſe hevins hie!
Soth is that undir God ye ben our hierdes,
Though to us beſtis ben the cauſis wrie;
This mene I now, for ſhe gan homward hie;
But execute was al beſide her leve
The goddis wil, for whiche ſhe muſt bileve. 623

The bentè mone with her hornis all pale,
Saturn and Jove, in Cancro joynid were,
That ſuche a raine from hevin gan availe
That every manir woman that was there
Had of that ſmoky raine a very feré,
At the which Pandare tho lough, and ſaid thenne,
Now were it time a lady to gone henne? 630

But, godè nece, if that I might evir pleſe
You any thing, than pray I you (quod he),
To don mine hert as now ſo gret an eſe
As for to dwell here al this night with me;
For why? this is your ownè houſe parde,
For by my trouthe, I ſay it nat in game,
To wende as nowe it were to me a ſhame. 637

Creſeidè, which that could as mokil gode
As halfe a world, toke hede of his prayere,
And ſens it rained, and al was in a flode,
She thought as gode chepe may I dwellin here,
And graunt it gladly with a frend'is chere,
And have a thonke, as grutche and than abide,
For home to gon it may nat well betide. 644

I wol, (quod ſhe) mine uncle lefe and dere!
Sens that you liſt; it ſkil is to be ſo;
I am right glad with you to dwellin here;
I ſeidè but in game that I wolde goe.
Iwis graunt mercy! necè, (quod he) tho;
Were it a game or no, the ſothe to tell,
Now am I glad ſens that you liſt to dwell. 651

Thus al is wel; but tho began aright
The newè joy, and al the feſt againe;
But Pandarus, if godely had he might,
He would have hyid her to bedde full faine,
And ſaid, O Lorde! this is an hugè raine,
This were a wethir for to ſlepin in,
And that I rede us ſonè to begin: 658

And, necè, wote ye where I wol you laie?
For that we ſhul nat liggin ferre aſonder,
And for ye neithir ſhullin, dare I ſaie,
Herin the noiſe of rainis ne of thonder,
By God right in my litil cloſet yonder,
And I wol in that uttir houſe alone
Ben wardain of your women everichone; 665

And in this middle chambre that ye se
Shal all your women slepin wel and softe,
And there I sayid shal your selvin be,
And if ye liggin wel to night come ofte,
And carith not what wethir is alofte.
Goth in anone, and whan so that ye lest
Go we to slepe, I trowe it be the best. 672

There n'is no more, but here astir sone
Thei drank, voidid, and curtins drew anone;
Gan every wight that hadde nought to done
More in the place out of the chambre gone;
And evir more so sternèliche it rone,
And blewe therwith so wonderliche loude,
That wel nigh no man herin othir coude. 679

Tho Pandarus her eme, right as him ought,
With women suche as were her most aboute,
Ful glad unto her bedd'is side her brought,
And toke his leve, and gan ful lowe to loute,
And said, Here at this closet dore withonte
Right ovirthwart your women liggin all,
That whom ye list of 'hem ye maie sone call. 686

So whan that she was in the closet laide,
And al her women forth by ordinaunce
A bedde werin, there as I have ysaide,
There n'as no more to skippin nor to praunce
But bodin go to beddè with mischaunce,
If any wight stering were any where,
And let 'hem slepin that abedde ywere. 693

But Pandarus, that wel couthe eche adele
The olde daunce, and every point therin,
Whan that he wiſtè that all thing was wele,
He thought he wolde upon his werke begin,
And gan the ſtewè dore all ſoft unpin
As ſtil as ſtone, withoutin lengir lette;
By Troilus adoun right he him ſette. 700

And, ſhortly to the pointe right for to gone,
Of al this werke he told him orde and ende,
And ſayid, Make the redy right anone,
For thou ſhalt into hevin bliſſe ywende.
Now blisful Venus! thou me grace yſende,
(Quod Troilus) for nevir yet no nede
Had I er now, ne halfindele the drede. 707

(Quod Pandarus) Ne drede the ner a dele,
For it ſhal be right as thou wolt deſire;
So thrive I this night ſhal I make it wele,
Or caſtin all the gruil in the fire.
Yet, blisful Venus! this night thou me' enſpire,
(Quod Troilus) as wis as I the ſerve,
And evir bet and bet ſhal til I ſterve, 714

And if I had, o Venus ful of mirthe!
Aſpectis badde of Mars or of Saturne,
Or thou Combuſte, or let were in my birth,
Thy father pray I al thilke harme diſturne
Of grace, and that I glad aien maie turne,
For love of him thou lovideſt in the ſhawe,
I mene Adon, that with the bore was ſlawe: 721

O Jove! eke for the love of faire Europe,
The which in form of bulle awaie thou set;
Now helpe, o Mars! that with thy blody cope,
For love of Cypria, thou me naught ne let;
O Phœbus! think when Daphne her selve shet
Undir the barke, and laurir woxe for drede,
Yet for her love o helpe me at this nede! 728

O Mercurie! for the love of her eke
For which Pallas was with Aglauros wrothe
Now helpe; and eke Diane! I the beseke
That this viage ne be nat to the lothe;
O Fatall Sustrin! whiche or any clothe
Me shapin was my destine me sponne,
So helpith to this werke that is begonne! 735

(Quod Pandarus) Thou wretchid mouc'is hert,
Art thou agast so that she wol the bite?
Why, do on this furred cloke upon thy sherte,
And folowe me, for I wol have the wite,
But bide, and let me gon before alite;
And with that worde he gan undone a trappe,
And Troilus he brought in by the lappe. 742

The sternè winde so loude began to route
That no wight other'is noise might yhere,
And thei that layin at the dore without
Full sikirly thei sleptin all ifere;
And Pandarus with a ful sobre chere
Goth to the dore anon withoutin lette
There as thei lay, and softily it shette; 749

And as he came ayenwarde privily
His nece awoke, and aſkith, Who goeth there?
Mine ownè dere nece! (quod he) it am I,
Ne wondrith not, ne have of it no fere;
And nere he came, and ſaid her in her ere,
No worde for love of God I you beſeche,
Let no wight riſe and herin of our ſpeche. 756

What! whiche waie be ye comen? *Benedicite!*
(Quod ſhe) and how thus unwiſte of 'hem all?
Here at this ſecret trappè dore (quod he.)
(Quod tho Creſeide) Let me ſome wight call.
Eigh! God forbid that it ſhould ſo befall
(Quod Pandarus) that ye ſuche foly wrought!
Thei might demin thing that thei nevir thought. 763

It is nat gode a ſleping bounde to wake,
Ne yeve a wight a cauſe for to devine:
Your women ſlepin al I undirtake,
So that for them the houſe men mightin mine,
And ſlepin wollin till the ſunnè ſhine,
And when my tale ybrought is to an ende
Unwiſt right as I came ſo wol I wende. 770

Now, necè mine, ye ſhul well undirſtonde,
(Quod he) ſo as ye women demin all,
That for to holde in love a man in honde,
And him her leſe and her dere hert to call,
And makin him an how above a call,
I mene, as love an othir in mene while,
She doth her ſelfe a ſhame and him a gile. 777

Now wherby that I tellin you al this
Ye wote your ſelfe as wel as any wight,
How that your love al fully grauntid is
To Troilus, that is the worthieſt wight
One of the world, and therto trouth iplight,
That but it were on him alonge ye n'olde
Him nevir falſin while ye livin ſholde. 784

Now ſtonte it thus, that ſith I fro you went
This Troilus, right platly for to ſeine,
Is through a guttir by a privy went
Into my chambre come in al this reine,
Unwiſt of every manir wight certaine
Save of my ſelfe, as wiſely have I joie,
And by the faith I owe Priam of Troie: 791

And he is come in ſuche paine and diſtreſſe
That but he be all fully wode by this
He ſodainly mote fall into wodeneſſe
But if God helpe: and the cauſe why is this,
He ſaith him told is of a frende of his
How that ye ſhould love one that hight Horaſt,
For ſorow of which this night ſhal be his laſt. 798

Creſeidè, whiche that al this wondir herde,
Gan ſodainly aboute her hert to colde,
And with a ſigh ſhe ſorowfully anſwerd,
Alas! I wende whoſoere talis tolde,
My dere hert, certis, eme, would me nat holde
So lightly faulſe: alas! conceitis wrong
What harme thei done! for now live I to long. 805

Horaste, alas! and falsin Troilus!
I knowe him not, God helpe me so! (quod she.)
Alas! what wickid spirite tolde him thus?
Now certis, eme, to morow' and I him se
I shal therof as full excusin me
As evir did woman, if that him like,
And with that worde she gan full sore to sike. 812

O God! (quod she) so worldly selinesse,
Whiche clerkis callin false felicite,
Ymedlid is with many'a bittirnesse
Ful anguishous, that is, God wote, (quod she)
Condicion of veine prosperite,
For eithir joyis comin nat ifere,
Or ellis no wight hath 'hem alwaie here. 819

O brotil wele of mann'is joie unstable!
With what wight so thou be, or how thou playe,
Eithir he wote that thou joie art mutable,
Or wote it nate, it mote ben one of twaie:
Now if he wote it nat how maie he saie
That he hath very joie and silinesse
That is of ignoraunce aie in derkenesse? 826

Now if he wote that joy is transitory,
(As every joie of worldly thing mote flie)
Than every time he that hath in memory
The drede of lesing makith him that he
May in no parfite sikirnesse ybe,
And if to lese his joie he set a mite
Than semith it that joy is worth ful lite. 833

Wherfore I wol define in this matere,
That truily for aught I can espie
There is no very wele in this world here;
But o thou wickid serpent Jelousie!
Thou misbelevid, envious folie,
Why hast thou Troilus made me to untrist,
That nevir yet agilte him that I wiste? 840

(Quod Pandarus) Thus fallin is this caas.
Why, uncle mine, (quod she) who tolde him this?
And why doth my dere hertè thus, alas!
Ye wote, ye, nece min, (quod he) what it is;
I hope al shal be wel that is amis,
For ye maie quenche al this if that you lest;
And doeth right so; I holde it for the best. 845

So shal I do to morow', iwis, (quod she)
And God toforne, so that it shal suffice.
To morow, alas! that were faire (quod he.)
Nay, nay, it maie nat stondin in this wise,
For, necè mine, thus writin clerkis wise,
That *Peril is with dretebing in ydrawe;*
Nay, suche abodis ben nat worthe an hawe. 854

Nece, allè thing hath time, I dare avowe,
For whan a chambre' a fire is or an hall,
Wel more nede is it sodainly rescowe
Than to dispute and aske amongis all
How is this candil in the strawe yfall?
Ah, *benedicite!* for al among that fare
The harme is done, and farwel feldèfare. 864

And, necè mine, ne take it nat agrese
If that ye suffre' him al night in this wo;
God helpe me so ye had him nevir lese;
What dare I sain, now there is but we two,
But wel I wote that ye wol nat so do,
Ye ben to wise to don so gret folie,
To put his life al night in jeopardie. 868

Had I him nevir lese? by God I wene
Ye ne had nevir thing so lese, (quod she.)
Now by my thrifte (quod he) that shall be sene,
For sithe ye make this ensample of me,
If I al night would him in sorowe se
For al the tresour in the toune of Troie,
I bidde God that I nevir mote have joie. 875

Now lokè than if ye that ben his love
Should put his life all night in jeopardy
For thing of nought: now by that God above
Nat onely this delaie cometh of folie
But of malice, if that I should nat lie:
What! platly and ye suffre' him in distresse
Ye neithir bounte done ne gentilnesse. 882

(Quod tho Creseide) Wol ye done o thing,
And ye therwith shal stinte al his disese,
Have here and berith him this blewè ring,
For there is nothing might him bettir plese
Save I my selfe, ne more his hert apese;
And saie, my derè herte! that his sorowe
Is causeleſſe, that shal he sene to morowe. 889

A ringe! (quod he) ye hasilwodis shaken!
Ye, necè mine, that ring must have a stone,
A stone which that might ded men alive maken,
And suche a ring trowe I that ye have none:
Discrecion out of your hed is gone,
That fele I now, (quod he) and that is routhe:
O time iloſt, wel maist thou cursin slouthe! 896

Wote ye not wel that noble' and hie corage
Ne soroweth nat, ne stintith eke for lite,
But if a fole were in a jelous rage
I n'olde settin at his sorowe a mite,
But feste him with a fewè wordis white
An othir daie, whan that I might him finde;
But this thing stant al in anothir kinde; 903

This is so gentle' and so tendir of herte
That with his deth he wol his sorowes wreke,
For trust it wel how sore so that him smerte
He wol to you no jelous wordis speke;
And forthy, nece, er that his hert to breke,
So speke your selfe to him of this matere,
For with a worde ye maie his hertè stere. 910

Now have I tolde what peril he is in,
And his coming unwist to every wight,
Ne parde harme maie there be none ne sin,
I wol my self be with you al this night;
Ye know eke how it is your ownè knight,
And by that right ye must upon him triste,
And I al prest to fetche him when you liste. 917

This accident ſo pitous was to here,
And eke ſo like a ſothe, at primè face,
And Troilus her knight, to her ſo dere,
His prive comming, and the ſikir place,
That though ſhe thought ſhe did him than a grace,
Conſidirid al thingis as thei ſtode,
No wondir is, ſens he did al for gode. 924

Creſeide anſwerde, As wiſely God at reſt
My ſoulè bring as me is for him wo,
And, eme, iwis faine would I don the beſt,
If that I a grace had for to do ſo;
But whethir that ye dwel or for him go
I am, til God me bettir mindè ſende,
At Dulcarnon, right at my witt'is ende. 931

(Quod Pandarus) Ye, necè, wol ye here,
Dulcarnon clepid is fleming of wretches,
It ſemith hard, for wretchis wol nought lere
For very ſlouthe, or othir wilfull tetches,
This ſaid is by them that ben't worth two fetches;
But ye ben wiſe, and that ye han on honde
N'is neithir harde ne ſkilful to withſtonde. 938

Than, eme, (quod ſhe) doeth hereof as you liſt,
But er he come I wol up firſt ariſe,
And for the love of God, ſens al my triſt
Is on you two, and ye beth bothè wiſe,
So werkith now, in ſo diſcrete a wiſe,
That I honour maie have and he pleſaunce,
For I am here al in your govirnaunce. 945

That is wel ſaid (quod he) my necè dere!
There gode thrifte on that wiſè gentill herte;
But liggith ſtill, and takith him right here,
It nedith nat no ferthir for him ſterte;
And eche of you eſe othir ſorowes ſmert,
For love of God and Venus I the herie,
For ſone hope I that we ſhullin ben merie. 952

This Troilus full ſone on knees him ſette
Ful ſobrely right by her bedd'is hed,
And in his beſtè wiſe his lady grette;
But Lord! ſo ſhe woxe ſodainliche all red,
And thought anone how that ſhe ſhulde be dedde;
She couldè nat o worde aright out bringe,
So ſodainly for his ſodaine cominge. 959

But Pandarus, that ſo wel couldè fele
In every thing, to plaie anon began,
And ſayid, Nece, ſe how this lord gan knele,
Now for your trouthè ſe this gentil man;
And with that worde he for a quiſhin ran,
And ſaid, Knelith now whilis that thou leſte,
There God your hertis bring ſonè to reſte. 966

Can I naught ſain, for ſhe bad him nat riſe,
If ſorowe it put out of her remembraunce,
Or ellis that ſhe toke it in the wiſe
Of duètie as for his obſervaunce;
But well finde I ſhe did him this pleſaunce,
That ſhe him kiſt, although ſhe ſikid ſore,
And bad him ſit adoun withoutin more. 973

(Quod Pandarus) Now wol ye weill begin,
Now doth him sittin doune, gode necè dere!
Upon your bedd'is side, al there within,
That eche of you the bet maie othir here;
And with that worde he drew him to the fere,
And toke a light, and found his countinaunce
As for to loke upon an old romaunce. 980

Creseide, that was Troilus lady right,
And clere stode in a grounde of sikirnesse,
All thought she that her servaunt and her knight
Ne shulde of trouthe none unright of her gesse,
Yet nathèlesse, considrid his distresse,
And that love is in cause of suche folie,
Thus to him spake she of his jelousie: 987

Lo, hertè mine! as would the excellence
Of love, aienst the whiche that no man maie,
Ne ought eke godely makin resistence,
And eke bicause I feltè wel and saie
Your grete trouth and service evèry daie,
And that your hert al mine was, soth to saine,
This drove me for to rewe upon your paine; 994

And your godenes have I founden' alway yet,
Of whiche my dere hert, and al my knight!
I thanke it you, as ferre as I have wit,
Al can I nat as much as it were right;
And I emforth my conning and my might
Have, and aie shal, how sore so that me smert,
Ben to you trewe and whole with all mine hert; 1001

And dredilesse that shal be founde at preve:
But, hertè mine! what al this is to saine
Shal well be told, so that ye nought you greve,
Though I to you right on your self complaine,
For therewith mene I finally the paine
That halt your hert and mine in hevinesse
Fully to slaine, and every wrong redresse. 1008

My gode hert mine! n'ot I for why ne how
That Jelousy, alas! that wicked wivere,
Thus causèlesse is cropin into you,
The harme of whiche I would fain delivere:
Alas! that he all whole or of him slivere
Should have his refute in so digne a place!
Than Jove him sone out of your herte erace! 1015

But o thou Jove! o auctour of nature!
Is this an honour to thy dignite
That folke ungilty suffrin here injure,
And who that gilty is al quite goeth he?
O were it lefull for to plaine of the,
That undeservid suffrist jelousie,
Of that I would upon the plaine and crie. 1022

Eke al my wo is this, that folke now usen
To saine right thus; Ye, jelousie is love,
And would a bushii of venim excusen,
For that a grane of love is on it shove,
But that wote high Jove that sittin above
If it be likir love, or hate, or grame,
And aftir that it ought to bere his name. 1029

But certaine is some manir jelousie
Is excusable more than some iwis,
As whan cause is and some suche fantasie,
With pite that so wel expressid is
That it unnethis doeth or saith amis,
But godely drinkith up al his distresse,
And that excuse I for the gentilnesse. 1036

And some so ful of fury is and dispite
That it surmountith his repression;
But, hertè mine! ye be nat in that plite,
That thonke I God, for whiche your passion
I wol nat cal it but illusion
Of haboundaunce of love and besy cure,
That doth your hertè this disese endure; 1043

Of which I am right sory but nat wrothe,
But for my devoir and your hert'is reste.
Where so you list, by ordal or by othe,
By sorte, or in what wise so that you leste,
For love of God let preve it for the beste,
And if that I be gilty do me die;
Alas! what might I more or done or seie? 1050

And tho with that a fewe bright teris newe
Out of her eyin fel, and thus she seide;
Now God, thou wost in thought ne dede untrewe
To Troilus was nevir yet Creseide;
With that her hed doun in the bed she leide,
And with the shete it wrie, and sighid sore,
And held her pece; nat a word spake she more. 1057

But now helpe God to quench al this sorow,
So hope I that he shal, for he beste may,
For *I have sene of a ful misty morow*
Folowen ful oft a wery somir's day,
And *Aftir wintir folowetb grene May*;
Men sene all day, and redin eke in stories,
That *Aftir sharpe flouris ben victories.* 1064

This Troilus, when he her wordis herde,
Have ye no care him listè nat to slepe,
For it thought him no strokis of a yerde
To here or se Creseide his lady wepe,
But wel he selte about his hertè crepe,
For every tere whiche that Creseide asterte,
The crampe of deth to straine him by the herte. 1071

And in his minde he gan the time accurse
That he came there, and that he was yborne,
For now is wicke ytournid into worse,
And all that labour he hath doen beforne
He wende it lost, he thought it n'as but lorne:
O Pandarus! thought he, alas! thy wile
Servith of nought, so welawaie the while! 1078

And therwithall he hing adoune his hedde,
And fell on knees, and sorowfully sight:
What might he sain? he felt he n'as but dedde,
For wroth was she that should his sorowes light;
But nathèlesse whan that he spekin might
Than said he thus; God wote that of this game
Whan all is wist than am I nat to blame. 1085

Therwith the ſorowe in hert ſo ſhet
That from his eyin fell there nat a tere,
And every ſpirite his vigour in knet,
So thei aſtonied and oppreſſid were;
The feling of his ſorowe or his fere,
Or of aught ellis, fledde were out of toune;
Adoune he fell all ſodainly in ſwoune. 1092

This was no little ſorowe for to ſe,
But all was huſh't, and Pandare up as faſt;
O necè, pece! or we be loſt (quod he;)
Bethe nat agaſt; but certain at the laſt
For this or that he into bedde him caſt,
And ſaied, O thefe! is this a mann'is herte?
And of he rent all to his barè ſherte, 1099

And ſayid, Nece, but and ye helpe us now,
Alas! your ownè Troilus is lorne.
Iwis ſo would I, and I wiſtè how,
Full ſain, (quod ſhe.) Alas that I was borne!
Ye, necè, woll ye pullin out the thorne
That ſtickith in his hertè (quod Pandare?)
Saie all foryeve, and ſtint is all this fare. 1106

Ye, that to me (quod ſhe) full levir were
Than all the gode the ſunne about ygoeth;
And therewithall ſhe ſwore him in his ere,
Iwis, my derè herte! I am not wrothe,
Have here my trouth, and many' an othir othe.
Now ſpeke to me, for it am I Creſeide:
But all for naught; yet might he not abreide. 1113

Therwith his poulce and paumis of his hondes
Thei gan to frote, and wete his templis twain,
And to delivir him fro bittir bondes
She oft him kift; and, ſhortly for to ſain,
Him to rewakin ſhe did all her pain;
And at the laſt he gan his breth to drawe,
And of his ſwough ſone aftir that adawe, 1120

And gan bet minde and reſon to him take;
But wondir ſore he was abaſhed iwis,
And with a ſigh whan he gan bet awake
He ſaied, O mercie, God! what thing is this?
Why doe ye with your ſelvin thus amis?
(Quod tho Creſeide) Is this a mann'is game?
What, Troilus! woll ye doe thus for ſhame? 1127

And therwithall her arme ovre' him ſhe laied,
And all foryave, and oftin time him keſt:
He thonkid her, and to her ſpake and ſaied
As fill to purpoſe for his hert'is reſt;
And ſhe to that anſwerde him as her leſt,
And with her godelie wordis him diſport
She gan, and oft his ſorowes to comfort. 1134

(Quod Pandarus) For aught I can aſpien
This light nor I ne ſervin here of naught,
Light is nat gode for ſikè folkis eyen;
But for the love of God, ſens ye ben brought
In this gode plite, let now non hevy thought
Ben hangid in the hertis of you twey;
And bare the candle towardes the chimney. 1141

Sone after this, though it no nede ywere,
Whan ſhe ſoche othis as her liſt deviſe
Had of him takin, her thought tho no fere
Ne cauſe eke none to bid him thennis riſe:
Yet leſſe thing than othis maie ſuffice
In many'a caſe, for every wight I geſſe
That lovith well menith but gentilneſſe. 1148

But in effect ſhe would ywete anon
Of what man, and eke where, and alſo why,
He jelous was, ſens there was cauſe non,
And eke the ſigne whiche that he toke it by,
She bade him that to tell her buſily,
Or ellis certain ſhe bare him on honde
That this was doen of malice, her to fonde. 1155

Withoutin more, ſhortly for to ſain,
He muſt obeie unto his ladie's heſt,
And for the laſſe harme he muſt ſomwhat fain;
He ſaied her, Whan ſhe was at ſoche a feſt
She might on him have lokid at the leſt;
N'ot I nat what (all dere inough a riſhe)
As he that nedis muſt a cauſe out fiſhe. 1162

And ſhe anſwerde, Swete hert! all were it ſo,
What harme was that, ſince I non evill mene?
For by that God that wrought us bothe two
In all manir thing is mine entent clene;
Soche argumentes ne be nat worthe a bene:
Woll ye the childiſh jelous counterfete?
Now were it worthy that ye were ibete. 1169

Tho Troilus gan ſorowfully ſike,
Leſt ſhe be wrothe him thought his hertè deide,
And ſaied, Alas! upon my ſorowe's ſike
Have mercie, o ſwete hertè mine, Creſeide!
And if that in tho wordis that I ſeide
Be any wrong, I woll no more treſpace:
Doeth what you liſt; I am all in your grace. 1176

And ſhe anſwerde, Of gilt miſericorde,
That is to ſaine, that I foryeve all this,
And evirmore on this night you recorde,
And bethe well ware ye doe no more amis.
Naie, dere hert mine! no more (quod he) iwis.
And now (quod ſhe) that I have you doe ſmerte
Foryeve it to me, mine owne ſwetè herte! 1183

This Troilus with bliſſe of that ſuppriſed
Put all in Godd'is hande, as he that ment
Nothing but well, and ſodainly aviſed
He her in his armis faſt to him hent;
And Pandarus with a full gode entent
Laied him to ſlepe, and ſaied, If ye be wiſe
Sownith not now, leſt morè folke ariſe. 1190

What might or maie the ſely larkè ſaie
Whan that the ſparhauke hath him in his ſote?
I can no more but of theſe ilkè twaie,
(To whom this tale ſugre be or ſote)
Though I tary a yere, ſomtime I mote
After mine authour tellin ther gladneſſe,
As well as I have tolde ther hevineſſe. 1197

Creseidè, whiche that felt her thus itake,
(As writin clerkis in ther bokis old)
Right as an aspin lefe she gan to quake
Whan she him felt her in his armis fold;
But Troilus all whole of caris cold
Gan thankin tho the blisfull goddis seven.
Thus *Sondry painis bringin folk to heven.* 1204

This Troilus in armis gan her straine,
And sayid, Swete! as evir mote I gone
Now be ye caught; now here is but we twaine;
Now yeldith you, for othir bote is none.
To that Creseide answerid thus anone,
Ne had I er now, my swete hertè dere!
Ben yoldin, iwis I were now not here. 1211

O soth is saied, that helid for to be
Of a fevir or othir grete sikneſſe
Men must drinkin, as we may oftin se,
Full bittir drinke, and for to have gladneſſe
Men drinkin oft in pain and in distresse;
I mene it here, as for this avinture,
That through a pain hath foundin al his cure. 1218

And now swetneſſe ysemith ferre more swete
That bittirneſſe assayid was biforne,
For out of wo in bliſſe now thei flete;
Non soche thei seltin sithins thei were borne;
Now is this bettir than bothe two be lorne:
For love of God take every woman hede
To werkin thus if it come to the nede. 1225

Creſeide all quite from every drede and tene,
As ſhe that juſte cauſe had him to triſt,
Made him ſoche feſt it joie was for to ſene,
Whan ſhe his trouth and clene entent ywiſt;
And as about a tre with many'a twiſt
Bitrent and writhin is the ſwete wodbinde
Gan eche of 'hem in armis othir winde. 1232

And as the newe abaſhid nightingale,
That ſtintith firſt, whan ſhe beginnith ſing,
Whan that ſhe herith any herd'is tale,
Or in the hedgis any wight ſtering,
And aſtir ſikir doeth her voice out ring,
Right ſo Creſeide, whan that her drede ſtent,
Opened her hert, and told him her entent. 1239

And right as he that ſeeth his deth iſhapen,
And dyin mote, in aught that he maie geſſe,
And ſodainly reſcous doeth him eſcapen,
And from his deth is brought in ſikirneſſe,
For al this worlde in ſoche preſent gladneſſe
Was Troilus, and hath his lady ſwete:
With no worſe hap God let us nevir mete! 1246

Her armis ſmall, her back both ſtreight and ſoft,
Her ſidis long, and fleſhy, ſmothe, and white,
He gan to ſtroke, and gode thrift bad full oft,
Her ſnow-white throte, her breſtis round and lite;
Thus in this heven' he gan him to delite,
And therwithall a thouſande times her kiſt,
That what to doen for joie unneth he wiſt. 1253

Than ſaied he thus, O Love! o Charite!
Thy mothir eke, Citherea the ſwete!
Aftir thy ſelf next heryid be ſhe,
Venus I mene, the wellwilly planete,
And next that Hymenæus! I the grete,
For nevir man was to you goddis hold
As I, whiche ye have brought fro caris cold. 1260

Benignè Love! thou holy bond of thinges,
Who ſo woll grace, and liſt the not honoure,
Lo! his deſire woll flie withoutin winges,
For n'oldiſt thou of bounte 'hem ſocoure
That ſervin beſt, and moſte alwaie laboure,
Yet were all loſt, that dare I well ſain certes,
But if thy grace ypaſſid our deſertes. 1267

And for thou me, that leſt thonke coud deſerve
Of them that nombrid ben unto thy grace,
Haſt holpin there I likely was to ſterve,
And me beſtowid in ſo high a place
That thilkè boundis maie no bliſſe ſurpace,
I can no more, but laude and reverence
Be to thy bounte and thine excellence. 1274

And therwithall Creſeide anon he kiſt,
Of whiche certain ſhe ne felt no diſeſe,
And thus ſaied he, Now would to God I wiſt,
Mine hertè ſwete! how I you beſt might pleſe.
What man (quod he) was evir thûs at eſe
As I, on whiche the fairiſt and the beſt
That er I ſeie deinith her hert to reſt? 1281

Here maie ye ſene that mercie paſſith right,
The' experience of that is felt in me,
That am unworthy to ſo ſwete a wight;
But harte mine! of your benignite
So thinkith, that though I unworthy be
Yet mote I nede amendin in ſome wiſe
Right through the vertue of your hie ſervice. 1288

And for the love of God, my lady dere!
Sith he hath wrought me for I ſhal you ſerve,
As thus I mene, that ye woll be my fere
To doe me live, if that you liſt, or ſterve;
So techith me how that I maie deſerve
Your thonke, ſo that I through min ignoraunce
Ne doe nothing that you be diſpleſaunce: 1295

For certis, freſhe and womanlichè wife!
This dare I ſaie, that trouth and diligence,
That ſhall ye findin in me all my life,
Ne I woll not certain breke your defence,
And if I doe, preſent or in abſence,
For love of God let ſlea me with the dede,
If that it like unto your womanhede. 1300

Iwis, (quod ſhe) mine ownè hert'is luſt!
My ground of eſe, and al mine hertè dere!
Graunt mercie! for on that is all my truſt:
But let us fall awaie fro this mattere,
For it ſuffiſith this that ſaid is here,
And at o worde, withoutin repentaunce,
Welcome my knight, my pece, my ſuffiſaunce! 1309

Of ther delite or joies one of the lest
Were impossible to my wit to saie,
But judgith ye that have ben at the fest
Of soche gladnesse, if that him list to plaie;
I can no more but thus, these ilkè twaie
That night, betwixin drede and sikirnesse,
Peltin in love the gretist worthinesse. 1316

O blisfull night! of them so long isought,
How blithe unto 'hem bothè two thou were!
Why ne' had I soche fest with my soule ibought,
Ye, or but the lest joie which that was there?
Awaie thou foulè daungir and thou fere!
And let 'hem in this hevin blisse ydwell,
That is so high that all ne can I tell. 1323

But sothe is, though I can not tellin all,
As can mine auchour of his excellence,
Yet have I saied, and God tofornè shall,
In every thing all wholly his sentence,
And if that I at Lov'is reverence
Have any worde in echid for the best
Doeth therwithall right as your selvin lest; 1330

For all my wordis here, and every part,
I speke 'hem all undir correction
Of you that feling have in lov'is art,
And put it all in your discrecion,
To encrese or make diminicion
Of my langage, and that I you besèche:
But now to purpose of my rathir speche. 1337

These ilkè two, that ben in armis laſt,
So lothe to 'hem aſondir gon it were,
That eche from othir wendin ben biraſt,
Or ellis, lo! this was ther moſtè fere,
That all this thing but nicè dremis were,
For whiche full oft eche of 'hem ſaid, O ſwete!
Clippe I you thus, or els doe I it mete? 1344

And, Lorde! ſo he gan godelie on her ſe,
That nevir his loke ne blent from her face,
And ſaied, O my dere hertè! maie it be
That it be ſothe that ye ben in this place?
Ye, hertè mine! God thanke I of his grace,
(Quod tho Creſeide) and therwithall him kiſt,
That where here ſpirite was for joie ſhe n'iſt. 1351

This Troilus full oft her eyin two
Gan for to kiſſe, and ſaied, O eyin clere!
It werin ye that wrought me ſochè wo,
Ye humble nettis of my lady dere,
Though there be mercie writtin in your chere,
God wote the text full harde is for to finde;
How couldin ye withoutin bonde me binde? 1358

Therwith he gan her faſt in armis take,
And well an hundrid timis gan he ſike,
Not ſoche ſorowfull ſighis as men make
For wo, or ellis whan that folke be ſike,
But eſie ſighis, ſoche as ben to like,
That ſhewid his affection within;
Of ſoche manir ſighis could he not blin. 1365

Sone aftir this thei ſpake of ſondrie thinges,
As fill to purpoſe of this avinture,
And playin enterchaungidin ther ringes,
Of whiche I can not tellin no ſcripture,
But well wot a broche of gold and azure,
In whiche a rubie ſet was like an hert,
Creſeide him yave, and ſtacke it on his ſherte. 1372

Lorde! trowè ye that a coveitous wretche
That blamith love, and halte of it diſpite,
That of tho pens that he can muckre and ketche
Was evir yet yeve to him ſoche delite,
As is in love in o poinct in ſome plite?
Naie, doubtileſſe, for all ſo God me ſave
So parfite joie ne maie no nigard have. 1379

Thei woll ſaie Yes, but Lorde that ſo thei lie!
Tho buſie wretchis full of wo and drede
That callin love a wodeneſſe or folie;
But it ſhall fall 'hem as I ſhall you rede,
Thei ſhall forgon the white and eke the rede,
And live in wo, there God yeve 'hem miſchaunce,
And every lovir in his trouthe avaunce. 1386

As would to God tho wretchis that diſpiſe
Service of love had eris all ſo long
As had Midas, all full of covetiſe,
And therto dronkin had as hotte and ſtrong
As Cyrus did for his affectis wrong,
To techin 'hem that thei ben in the vice,
And lovirs not, although thei hold 'hem nice. 1393

Thefe ilkè two of whom that I you faie,
Whan that ther hertis well affurid were,
Tho gonnin thei to fpekin and to plaie,
And eke rehercin how, and whan, and where,
Thei knewin firft, and every wo or fere
That paffid was; but all foche hevineffe,
Ithonkid God, was tournid to gladneffe. 1400

And evirmore whan that 'hem fell to fpeke
Of any thing of foche a time agone
With kiffing all that talè fhould ybreke,
And fallin into a newe joie anone,
And diddin all ther might, fens thei were one,
For to recoveren bliffe and ben at efe,
And paifid wo with joyis counterpaife. 1407

Refon woll not that I fpekin of flepe,
For it accordith not to my mattere;
God wote thei toke of it full little kepe,
But left this night that was to 'hem fo dere
Ne fhould in vaine efcape in no manere
It was bifet in joie and bufineffe
Of all that founith into gentilneffe. 1414

But whan the cocke, commune aftrologer,
Gan on his breft to bete and aftir crowe,
And Lucifer, the day'is meffanger,
Gan for to rife, and out his bemis throwe,
And eftward rofe, to him that could it know,
Fortuna Major, than anone Crefeide
With herte fore to Troilus thus feide: 1421

Mine hert'is life, my truſt, al my pleſaunce!
That I was borne, alas! that me is wo,
That daie of us mote make diſceveraunce,
For time it is to riſe and hennis go,
Or ellis I am loſt for evirmo.
O Night! alas! why n'ilt thou ore us hove
As long as whan Alcmena laie by Jove? 1428

O blackè Night! as folke in bokis rede,
That ſhapin art by God this worlde to hide
At certain timis with thy derkè wede,
That undir that men might in reſt abide,
Wel oughtin beſtes to plain and folke to chide,
That thereas daie with labor would us breſt,
That thou us flieſt and deiniſt us not reſt. 1435

Thou doeſt, alas! ſo ſhortly thine office,
Thou rakle Night, that God makir of kinde
The for thine haſt, and thine unkindè vice
So faſt aie to our hemiſpherè binde,
That nevirmore undir the ground thou winde,
For through thy rakle hying out of Troie
Have I forgone thus haſtily my joie. 1442

This Troilus, that with tho wordis felt,
As thought him tho, for piteous diſtreſſe
The blodie teris from his hertè melt,
As he that yet nevir ſoche hevineſſe
Aſſayid had out of ſo grete gladneſſe,
Gan therewithall Creſeide his lady dere
In armis ſtrain, and ſaid in this manere: 1449

O cruill Daie! accuſer of the joie
That Night and Love hath ſtole and faſt iwrie,
Accurſid be thy comming into Troie!
For every bowre hath one of thy bright eyen:
Envious Daie! what liſt the ſo to ſpien?
What haſt thou loſt? why ſekiſt thou this place?
There God thy light ſo quenchè for his grace! 1456

Alas! what have theſe lovirs the agilt?
Diſpitous Daie! thine be the paine of hell,
For many' a lovir haſt thou ſlain and wilt;
Thy poring in woll no where let 'hem dwell:
What! profriſt thou thy light here for to ſel?
Go, ſell it them that ſmalè ſelis grave;
We woll the not; us nedith no daie have. 1463

And eke the ſonnè Titan gan he chide,
And ſaid, O fole! well maie men the diſpiſe,
That haſt all night the Dauning by thy ſide,
And ſuffriſt her ſo ſone up fro the riſe,
For to diſeſe us lovirs in this wiſe;
What? hold your bed there thou and thy Morow;
I biddè God ſo yeve you both ſorowe. 1470

Therwith full ſore he ſighed, and thus he ſeide:
My lady bright, and of my wele or wo
The well and rote! o godely mine, Creſeide!
And ſhall I riſe, alas! and ſhall I goe?
Now fele I that mine hertè mote a two;
And how ſhould I my life an hourè ſave
Sens that with you is all the life I have? 1477

What ſhall I doen? for certis I n'ot how,
Ne whan, alas! I ſhall the timè ſe
That in this plite I maie ben eft with you,
And of my life God wote how ſhall that be,
Sens that deſire right now ſo bitith me
That I am dede anon but I retourne:
How ſhould I long, alas! fro you ſojourne? 1484

But nathèleſſe, mine ownè ladie bright!
Yet were it ſo that I wiſt uttirly
That I your humble ſervaunt and your knight
Were in your herte iſet ſo fermily
As ye in mine, the whiche thing truily
Me levir were than have theſe worldis twain,
Yet ſhould I bet endurin all my pain. 1491

To that Creſeide anſwerid right anon,
And with a ſigh ſhe ſaied, O herte dere!
The game iwis ſo ferforth now is gon
That firſt ſhall Phœbus fallin from the ſphere,
And everiche egle ben the dov'is fere,
And every rocke out of his place aſterte,
Er Troilus go out of Creſeide's herte. 1498

Ye ben ſo depe within mine herte ygrave,
That tho I would it turne out of my thought,
As wiſely very God my ſoulè ſave,
To dyin in the pain I couldè nought;
And for the love of God, that us hath wrought,
Let in your brain none othir fantaſie
So crepin, that it cauſè me to die. 1505

And that ye me would have as faſt in minde
As I have you, that would I you beſeche,
And if I wiſt ſothily that to finde,
God might not o point of my joyis eche.
But, hertè mine! withoutin morè ſpeche,
Bethe to me true, or ellis were it routhe,
For I am thine, by God and by my trouthe. 1512

Bethe glad forthy, and live in ſikirneſſe,
Thus ſaied I ner er this, ne ſhall to mo;
And if to you it were a grete gladneſſe
To tourne ayen ſone aftir that ye go,
As faine would I as ye that it were ſo,
As wiſely God mine hertè bring to reſte,
And him in armis toke, and oftè keſte. 1519

Ayenſt his will, ſithe it mote nedis be,
This Troilus up roſe, and faſt him cled,
And in his armis toke his lady fre
An hundrid times, and on his waie him ſped,
And with ſoche wordis as his herte ybled
He ſeidè, Farith wel, my dere herte ſwete!
That God us grauntè ſound and ſone to mete. 1526

To whiche no worde for ſorowe ſhe anſwerd,
So ſore gan his parting her to diſtrain,
And Troilus unto his paleis ferd,
As wo bigon as ſhe was, ſothe to ſaine,
So harde him wrong of ſharpe deſire the pain;
For to ben efte there he was in pleſaunce,
That it may nere out of his remembraunce. 1533

Retournid to his roiall paleis sone.
He soft unto his bedde gan for to shrinke,
To slepè long, as he was wont to doen;
But all for naught; he maie wel ligge and winke,
But slepe maie there none in his hertè sinke,
Thinking how she, for whom desire him brende,
A M. folde was worth more than he wende. 1540

And in his thought gan up and doune to wende
Her wordis all, and every countinaunce,
And fermily impressin in his minde
The lestè poincte that to him was plesaunce,
And verily of thilkè remembraunce
Desire al newe him brende, and lust to brede
Gan more than erst, and yet toke he non hede. 1547

Creseide also right in the samè wise
Of Troilus gan in her hertè shet,
His worthinesse, his lust, his dedis wise,
His gentilnesse, and how she with him met,
Thonking Love that he so well her beset,
Desiring oft to have her hertè dere
In soche a place as she durst make him chere. 1554

Pandare a morowe which that commin was
Unto his necè gan her faire to grete,
And saied, All this night so rained it alas!
That all my drede is that ye, necè swete!
Have little leisir had to slepe and mete:
All night (quod he) hath rain so do me wake
That some of us I trowe ther heddis ake. 1561

And nere he came, and ſaid, How ſtant it now,
This merie morowe? nece, how can ye fare?
Creſeide anſwerde, Nevir the bet for you,
Foxe that ye ben, God yeve your hertè care;
God helpe me ſo ye cauſid all this fare,
Trowe I, (quod ſhe) for all your wordis white:
O who ſo ſeeth you knowith you full lite! 1568

With that ſhe began her face for to wrie
With the ſhetè, and woxe for ſhame all redde,
And Pandarus gan undir for to prie,
And ſayid, Nece, if that I ſhall ben dedde
Have here a ſwerde and ſmitith of my hedde:
With that his arme all ſodainly he thriſte
Undir her necke, and at the laſt her kiſte. 1575

I paſſe al that, which chargith naught to ſay:
What! God foryave his deth, and ſhe alſo
Foryave; and with her uncle gan to plaie,
For othir cauſe ne was there none than ſo:
But of this thing right to th' effect to go,
Whan time ywas home to her houſe ſhe went,
And Pandarus hath fully his entent. 1582

Now tournè we ayen to Troilus,
That reſtèleſſe full long a bedde ylaie,
And privily ſent aftir Pandarus,
To him to come in all the haſt he maie:
He come anon, not onis ſaied he naie,
And Troilus full ſobirly he grete,
And doune upon the bedd'is ſide him ſete. 1589

This Troilus with all th'affectioun
Of frendly love that hertè maie devise
To Pandarus on kneis fill adoune,
And er that he would of the place arise
He gan him thankin on his bestè wise;
An hundrid time he gan the timè blesse
That he was borne, to bring him fro distresse. 1596

He said, O frend of frendes! the aldirbest
That evir was, the sothe for to tell,
Thou hast in heven ibrought my soule at rest
Fro Phlegethon, the firie flode of hell,
That though I might a thousande timis sel
Upon a daie my life in thy service
It ne might not a mote in that suffice. 1603

The sonnè, whiche that al the worlde maie se,
Sawe nevir yet (my life that dare I leie)
So joily, faire, and godely, as is she
Whose I am all, and shall till that I deie;
And that I thus am her's, dare I wel seie,
That thankid be the highè worthinesse
Of Love, and eke thy kindè businesse. 1610

Thus hast thou me no little thing iyeve;
For why? to the obligid be for aie
My life; and why? for through thine helpe I live,
Or els dedde had I ben many a daie:
And with that worde doun in his bed he laie,
And Pandarus full sobirly him herde
Till all was said, and than he him answerde: 1617

My derè frende! if I have doen for the
In any case, God wote it is me lefe,
And am as glad as man maie of it be,
God helpe me so; but take now not agrefe
That I shall saine; beware of this mischefe,
That there as now thou brought art to thy blisse
That thou thy self ne cause it not to misse: 1624

For of Fortun'is sharpe adversite
The worstè kinde of infortune is this,
A man to have ben in prosperite,
And it remembir whan it passid is:
Thou' art wise inough, forthy doe nat amis;
Be not to rakill though thou sittè warme,
For if thou be certain it woll the harme. 1631

Thou art at ese, and hold the well therin,
For all so sure as redde is every fire
As grete a crafte is to kepe well as winne:
Bridle alwaie thy speeb and thy desire,
For *Worldly joie holdeth not but by a wire,*
That previth well, it brest al daie so ofte,
Forthy nede is to werkin with it softe. 1638

(Quod Troilus) I hope, and God toforne,
My derè frende! that I shall so me bere
That in my gilt ther shal nothing ben lorne,
Ne I n'ill rakle for to grevin her;
It nedith not this mattir ofte to tere,
For wistist thou mine hertè wel, Pandare,
God wote of this thou wouldist litil care. 1645

Tho gan he tell him of his gladè night,
And whereof first his hert ydradde and how,
And sayid, Frende, as I am a true knight,
And by that faithe I owe to God and you,
I had it nevir halfe so hote as now,
And evir the more that desire me biteth
To love her best the more it me deliteth. 1652

I n'ot my self not wisely what it is,
But now I felin a newe qualite,
Ye, all anothir than I did er this.
Pandare answerid and saied thus, that he
That onis maie in hevin blisse ybe
He felith othir wayis, dare I laie,
Than thilkè time he first herd of it faie. 1659

This is a worde for al, that Troilus
Was nevir ful to speke of this matere,
And for to praisin unto Pandarus
The bounte of his bright lady so dere,
And Pandarus to thanke and makin chere:
This tale was aie span newe to beginne
Til that the night departid 'hem atwinne. 1666

Sone after this, for that Fortune it would,
Icomin was the blisful timè swete
That Troilus was warnid that he should
There he was erst Creseide his lady mete,
For whiche he felte his herte in joiè fiete,
And faithfully gan all the goddis hery;
And let se now if that he can be mery. 1673

And holdin was the forme and al the gise
Of her comming, and eke of his also,
As it was erst, whiche nedith nought devise;
But plainly to th' effecte right for to go,
In joie and surete Pandarus 'hem two
A bedde ybrought whan that 'hem bothè left,
And thus thei ben in quiete and in rest. 1680

Naught nedith it to you, sithe thei ben met,
To aske at me if that thei blithe ywere?
For if it erst was well tho was it bet
A thousande folde, this nedith not enquere;
Ago was every sorow' and every fere,
And bothe iwis thei had, and so thei wende,
As mochil joie as herte maie comprehende. 1687

This n'is no litil thing of for to sey,
This passith every wit for to devise,
For eche of 'hem gan othir's lust obey;
Felicite, whiche that these clerkis wise
Commendin so, ne may not here suffise;
This joye ne maie not writtin be with inke;
This passith al that any hert maie thinke. 1694

But cruil day, so welaway the stounde!
Gan for to' aproche, as thei by signis knewe,
For whiche 'hem thought thei felin deth'is wounde:
So wo was 'hem that chaungin gan ther hewe,
And day thei gonnin to dispise al newe,
Calling it traitour, envious, and worse,
And bittirly the day'is light thei corse. 1701

(Quod Troilus) Alas! now am I ware
That Pyrois, and tho swifte stedis thre
Whiche that ydrawin forth the Sunn'is chare
Han gon some bypathe in dispite of me,
And makith it so sonè day to be,
And for the Sunne him hastith thus to rise
Nè shal I nevir don him sacrifise. 1708

But nedis daie departin 'hem must sone;
And whan ther spechè don was and ther chere
Thei twin anon, as thei were wont to done,
And settin time of meting efte ifere,
And many' a night thei wrought in this manere:
And thus Fortune a time yladde in joie
Creseide and eke this king'is son of Troie. 1715

In suffisaunce, in blisse, and in singinges,
This Troilus gan al his life to lede;
He spendith, justith, and makith festinges;
He gevith frely ofte, and chaungith wede;
He helde about him alwaie out of drede
A world of folke, as come him well of kinde,
The freshist and the best that he could finde. 1722

That suche a voice was of him and a steven
Throughout the world of honour and largesse
That it up ronge unto the yate of heven;
And as in love he was in suche gladnesse
That in his hert he demid as I gesse
That there n'is lovir in this world at ese
So wel as he, and thus gan love him plese. 1729

The godelihede or beaute whiche that Kinde
In any othir lady had isette
Can not the mountenaunce of a gnat unbinde
About his hert of al Creseid'is nette;
He was so narowe' imaskid and iknette
That is undon in any manir side
That n'il nat ben for aught that maie betide. 1736

And by the honde ful ostin he would take
This Pandarus, and into gardin lede,
And suche a fest and suche a processe make
Him of Creseide, and of her womanhede,
And of her beaute, that withoutin drede
It was an heven his wordis for to here,
And than he wouldè sing in this manere: 1743

Love, that of erthe and se hath govirnaunce,
Love, that his hestis hath in hevin hie,
Love, that with a right wholsome aliaunce
Halte peple joynid as him liste 'hem gie,
Love, that yknittith lawe and companie,
And couplis doth in vertue for to dwel,
Binde this accorde that I have tolde and tel. 1750

That that the world with faith, whiche that is stable,
Diversith so his stoundis according,
That elementis that bethe discordable
Holdin a bonde perpetually during,
That Phœbus mote his rosy day forth bring,
And that the mone hath lordship ore the nightes,
Al this doeth Love; aie heried be his mightes! 1757

That that the ſe, that gredy is to flowen,
Conſtrainith to a certaine endè ſo
His flodis, that ſo fierſly thei ne growen
To drenchin erthe and al for evirmo,
And if that Love aught let his bridil go
Al that now lovith aſondir ſhould lepè,
And loſt were al that Love halt nowe to hepe. 1764

So would to God, that authour is of kinde,
That with his bonde Love of his vertue liſt
To ſerchin hertis al, and faſt to binde,
That from his bonde no wight the wey out wiſt,
And hertis colde them wold I that he twiſt
To make 'hem love, and that liſt him aie rewe
On hertis ſore, and kepe 'hem that ben trewe. 1771

In allè nedis for the toun'is werre
He was, and aie the firſt in armis dight,
And certainly, but if that bokis erre,
Save Hector moſt idradde of any wight;
And this encreſe of hardineſſe and might
Come him of love, his ladies thanke to win,
That altirid his ſpirite ſo within. 1778

In time of truce on hauking would he ride,
Or ellis hunt the bore, beare, or lioun,
The ſmalè beſtis let he gon beſide;
And whan that he come riding into' the toun
Ful oft his lady from her window doun,
As freſh as faucon comin out of mue,
Ful redy was him godely to ſalue. 1785

And moſt of love and vertue was his ſpeche,
And in diſpite had he al wretchidneſſe;
And doutleſſe no nede was him to beſeche
To honourin them that had worthineſſe,
And eſin 'hem that werin in diſtreſſe;
And glad was he if any wight wel ferde
That lovir was whan he it wiſt or herde. 1792

For, ſothe to ſaine, he loſt helde every wight
But if he were in Lov'is high ſervice,
I menè folke that aught it ben of right;
And ore al this ſo wel coulde he deviſe
Of ſentiment, and in ſo uncouthe wiſe
Al his array, that every lovir thought
That al was well what ſo he ſaid or wrought. 1799

And though that he be come of blode royal
Him liſt of pride at no wight for to chace;
Benigne he was to eche in general,
For which he gate him thanke in every place:
Thus wouldè Love, iheried be his grace!
That pride and ire, envie and avarice,
He gan to flie, and every othir vice. 1806

Thou lady bright, the doughtir of Dione!
Thy blinde and wingid ſonne eke, Dan Cupide!
Ye Suſtrin Nine eke! that by Helicone
In hil Parnaſſo liſtin for to' abide,
That ye thus ferre han deinid me to gide
I can no more, but ſens that ye wol wende
Ye heried ben for aie withoutin ende! 1813

Through you have I ſaid fully in my ſong
Th' effecte and joie of Troilus ſervice,
Al be that there was ſome diſeſe among,
As mine auctour to liſtith to deviſe:
My Thirdè Boke now ende I in this wiſe,
And Troilus in luſte and in quiete
Is with Creſeidè, his owne ladie ſwete. 1820

Explicit liber tertius.

PROŒMIUM LIBRI QUARTI.

But all to litill, welaway the while!
Laſtith ſuche joie, ithonkid be Fortune,
That ſemith trewiſt whan ſhe wol begile,
And can to folis ſo her ſonge entune
That ſhe 'hem hent and blent, traitour commune,
And whan a wight is from her whele ithrowe
Than laughith ſhe, and makith him the mowe. 7

From Troilus ſhe gan her brightè face
Away to writhe, and toke of him non hede,
And caſte him clene out of his ladie's grace,
And on her whele ſhe ſet up Diomede,
For which min hert right now ginnith to blede;
And now my pen, alas! with which I write,
Quakith for drede of that I muſt endite: 14

For how Creſeidè Troilus forſoke,
Or at the left how that ſhe was unkinde,
Mote hennisforthe ben matir of my Boke,
As writin folke through which it is in minde:
Alas! that thei ſhould evir cauſè finde
To ſpeke her harme! and if thei on her lie
Iwis them ſelfe ſhould have the vilanie. 21

O ye Erinnyes! Night'is doughtirs thre,
That endèleſſe complaine evir in paine,
Megæra, Alecto, and Tyſiphone,
Thou cruil Mars eke! fathir of Quirine,
This ilke Fourth Boke helpith me for to fine,
So that the loos of love and life ifere
Of Troilus be fully ſhewid here. 28

INCIPIT LIBER QUARTUS.

LYGGING in hoſt, as I have ſaide er this,
The Grekis ſtrong aboutin Troiè toune,
Bifell that whan that Phœbus ſhining is
Upon the breſte of Hercules Lioun
That Hector with many a bold boroun
Caſt on a daie with Grekis for to fight,
As he was wont, to greve 'hem what he might. 35

N'ot I how long or ſhort it was bitwene
This purpoſe and that day thei fightin mente;
But on a daie wel armid bright and ſhene
Hector and many' a worthy knight out wente
With ſpere in honde, and with bigge bowis bente,
And in the berde, withoutin lengir lette,
Ther fomen in the felde anon 'hem mette. 42

The longè day with ſperis ſharpe igrounde,
With arowes, dartis, ſwerdes, and macis fel,
Thei fight, and bringin horſe and man to grounde,
And with ther axis out the brainis quel;
But in the laſt ſhoure, the ſothe for to tel,
The folke of Troie 'hem ſelvin ſo miſleden 49
That with the worſe at night homeward thei fleden.

At whichè day was takin Antenor,
Polydamas, and alſo Meneſtes,
Xantippe, Sarpedon, Polyſtenor,
Polite, or the Trojan, Dan Ruphes,
And othir leſſè folk, as Phebuſes,
So that for harme that daie the folke of Troie
Dredin to leſe a grete parte of ther joie. 56

Of Priamus was yeve, at Grekes requeſt,
A time of truce, and tho thei gonnin trete
Ther priſoners to chaungin moſt and leſt,
And for the ſurplus yevin ſommis grete;
This thing anon was couthe in every ſtrete,
Bothe in th' aſſege, in toun, and every where,
And with the firſt it came to Calchas ere. 63

When Calchas knew this tretiſe ſhould yholde,
In conſiſtorie' amonge the Grekis ſone
He gan in thringe forthe with the lordis olde,
And ſet him there as he was wont to done,
And with a chaungid face 'hem bade a bone,
For love of God, to done that reverence
To ſtintin noiſe, and yeve him audience. 70

Than ſaid he thus, Lo! Lordis mine, I was
Troyan, as it is knowin out of drede,
And if that you remembre' I am Calchas,
That aldirfirſt yave comfort to your nede,
And toldè wel howe that you ſhouldin ſpede,
For dredèleſſe through you ſhal in a ſtounde
Ben Troie ibrent, and betin doun to grounde. 77

And in what forme or in what manir wiſe
This toun to ſhende, and al your luſt atcheve,
Ye have er this wel herde me you deviſe;
This knowin ye, my Lordis, as I leve,
And for the Grekis werin me ſo leve,
I came my ſeiſe in my propir perſone
To teche in this how you was beſt to done. 84

Having unto my treſour ne my rent
Right no regardę in reſpecte of your eſe,
Thus al my gode I lefte and to you went,
Wening in this you, Lordis, for to pleſe;
But al that loſſe ne doth me no diſeſe;
I vouchſafe do, as wiſely have I joie,
For you to leſe al that I have in Troie, 91

Save of a doughtir that I lefte, alas!
Sleping at home when out of Troie I ſtert:
O ſterne, o cruil, fathir that I was!
Howe might I have in that ſo hard an hert?
Alas that I ne' had brought her in my ſhert!
For ſorow' of which I wol nat live to morow
But if ye, Lordis, rewe upon my ſorow. 98

For bicauſe that I ſawe no time er now
Her to delivre' I holdin have my pees,
But now or nevir, if that it like you,
I may her have right ſonè nowe doutlees:
O helpe and grace amongis al this prees!
Rewe on this oldè catife in diſtreſſe,
Sith I through you have all this hevineſſe. 105

Ye have now caught and fettrid in priſon
Troyans inowe, and if your willis be
My childe with one may have redemption;
Now for the love of God and of bounte
One of ſo fele, alas! ſo yefe him me:
What nede were it this prayir for to werne,
Sith ye ſhul have both folke and toun as yern? 112

On peril of my life I ſhal nat lie,
Apollo hath me tolde ful faithfully;
I have eke foundin by aſtronomy,
By ſort, and eke by augury, trewely,
And dare wel ſaie the time is faſtè by
That fire and flambe on all the toun ſhal ſprede,
And thus ſhal Troie yturne to aſhin dede. 119

For certaine Phœbus and Neptunus bothe,
That makidin the wallis of the toun,
Ben with the folke of Troie alwaie ſo wroth
That thei wol bring it to confuſioun;
Right in diſpite of King Laomedoun,
Bicauſe he n'oldè payin 'hem ther hire,
The toun of Troiè ſhal ben ſet on fire. 126

Telling his tale alway this oldè grey,
Humble in ſpeche and in his loking eke,
The ſaltè teris from his eyin twey
Ful faſt yronnin doun by eithir cheke;
So long he gan of ſocour 'hem beſeke
That for to hele him of his ſorowes ſore
Thei gave him Antenor withoutin more. 133

But who was glad inough but Calchas tho?
And of this thing ful ſone his nedis leide
On them that ſhouldin for the tretiſe go,
And them for Antenor ful oftè preide
To bringin home King Thoas and Creſeide;
And whan Priam his ſafe conduct ſent,
Th' embaſſadours to Troie ſtreight thei went. 140

The cauſe i-tolde of ther comming, the olde
Priam the King ful ſone in generall
Gan hereupon his parliment to holde,
Of whiche th' effecte rehercin you I ſhall:
Th' embaſſadours ben anſwerde for finall
The eſchaunge of priſoners and al this nede
'Hem likith wel, and forth in thei procede. 147

This Troilus was preſent in the place
Whan aſkid was for Antenor Creſeide,
For whiche ful ſone to chaungin gan his face,
As he that with tho wordis wel nigh deide;
But nathèleſſe he no worde to it ſeide,
Leſt men ſhould his affection eſpie;
With mann'is hert he gan his ſorowes drie. 154

And ful of anguish and of gresly drede
Abode what othir lordes would to it sey,
And if that thei would graunt, as God forbede!
Th' eschaunge of her; then thought he thingis twey,
First how to save her honor, and what wey
He mightè best th' eschaunge of her withstonde;
Ful fast he cast how allè this might stonde. 161

Love him made allè prest to done her bide,
And rathir dyin than that she should go,
But Reason said him on that othir side
Withoutin assent of her do nat so,
Lest for thy werkè she would be thy foe,
And sain, that through thy medling is iblowe
Your bothè love ther it was erst not knowe. 168

For whiche he gan deliberen for the beste,
And though the lordis wouldin that she went
He wouldè suffir them graunt what 'hem lest,
And tel his lady first what that thei ment;
And when that she had said him her entent,
Theraftir would he werkin all so blive
Tho al the world ayen it would ystrive. 175

Hector with that full wel the Grekis herde
For Antenor how thei would have Creseide,
Gan it withstonde, and sobirly answerde;
Sirs, she ne is no prisoner (he seide;)
I n'ot on you who that this chargè leide,
But on my parte ye maie eftsones 'hem tell
We usin here no women for to sell. 182

The noise of peple upstert then atones
As brimme as blase of strawe iset on fire,
For infortune it wouldè for the nones
Thei shouldin ther confusion desire.
Hector, (quod thei) what gost may you enspire
This woman thus to shilde, and done us lese
Dan Antenor? a wrong waie now ye chese 189

That is so wise, and eke so bolde baroun,
And we have nede of folke, as men may se;
He is one of the gretist of this toun:
O Hector! lette suche thy fantasies be;
O King Priam! (quod thei) thus seggè we,
That all our voice is to forgone Creseide,
And to delivir Antenor thei preide. 196

O Juvenal, Lorde! trewe is thy sentence,
That litil wenin folke what is to yerne,
That thei ne findin' in ther desire offence,
For cloude of errour ne lette 'hem discerne
What best is; and lo! here ensample' as yerne;
These folke desirin now deliviraunce
Of Antenor, that brought 'hem to mischaunce: 203

For he was aftir traitour to the toune
Of Troy, alas! thei quitte him out to rathe:
O nicè world, lo thy discrecion!
Creseidè, which that nevir did 'hem scathe,
Shal nowe no lengir in her blissè bathe,
But Antenor he shal come home to toune,
And she shal out: thus said both heere and heune. 210

For which delibered was by parliment
For Antenor to yeldin out Creſeide,
And it pronouncid by the Preſident,
Although that Hector nay ful oftè praide;
And finally, what wight that it withſaide
It was for naught; it muſt yben and ſhould,
For ſubſtaunce of the parliment it would. 217

Departid out o' th' parliment echone;
This Troilus, withoutin wordis mo,
Unto his chambre ſpedde him faſt alone,
But if it were a man of his or two,
The whiche he had out faſtè for to go,
Bicauſe that he would ſlepin, as he ſaide,
And haſtily upon his bedde him laide. 224

And as in wintir levis ben biraſte
Eche aftir othir til the trees be bare,
So that there n'is but barke and braunche ilaſte,
Lithe Troilus biraft of eche welfare,
Iboundin in the blackè barke of care,
Diſpoſid wode out of his witte to breide,
So ſore him ſate the chaunging of Creſeide. 231

He riſt him up and every dore he ſhette
And window eke, and tho this wofull man
Upon his bedd'is ſide adoune him ſette,
Ful like a ded image, both pale and wan,
And in his breſt the hepid wo began
Out bruſt, and he to workin in this wiſe,
In his wodeneſſe, as I ſhal you deviſe. 238

Right as the wilde bulle beginnith ſpring
Now here now there, idartid to the herte,
And of his deth rorith in complaining,
Right ſo gan he about the chambre ſterte,
Smiting his breſt aie with his fiſtis ſmerte;
His hed to the' wall, his body to the grounde,
Ful ofte he ſwapte, him ſelvin to confounde. 245

His eyin two for pite of his herte
Out ſtremidin as ſwifte as wellis twey;
The highe ſobbis of his ſorowes ſmerte
His ſpeche him reſte; unnethis might he ſey
O Deth, alas! why n'ilt thou do me dey?
Acurſid be that day which that Nature
Yſhope me to ben a liv'is creture! 252

But aftir, whan the fury' and al the rage
Whiche that his herte twiſt and faſte threſt
By length of time ſomewhat gan aſwage,
Upon his bedde he laide him doun to reſt;
But tho begon his teres more out to breſt,
That wondir is the body maie ſuffiſe
To halfe this wo whiche that I you deviſe. 259

Than ſaide he thus; Fortune, alas the while!
What have I done? what have I the agilt?
How mightiſt thou for routhe thus me begile?
Is there no grace? and ſhal I thus be ſpilt?
Shal thus Creſeide away for that thou wilt?
Alas! how mightiſt thou in thine hert finde
To ben to me thus cruil and unkinde? 266

Have I the nat honourid al my live,
As thou well wotest, above the goddis all?
Why wilt thou then of this joie me deprive?
O Troilus! what may men now the call
But wretche of wretchis, out of honour fal
Into mise'ry? in whiche I wol bewaile
Creseide, alas! til that the brethe me faile. 273

Alas, Fortune! if that my life in joie
Displesid had unto thy foule envie,
Why ne' haddist thou my fathir King of Troy
Birafte the life, or done my brethrin die,
Or slaine my selfe, that thus complaine and crie?
I combre world that maie of nothing serve,
But evir die and nevir fully sterve. 280

If that Creseide alone werin me lafte
Naught raught I whidir thou woldist me stere,
And her, alas! than hast thou me birafte:
But evirmore, lo! this is thy manere,
To reve a wight that moste is to him dere,
To preve in that thy gierfull violence;
Thus am I loft, there helpith no defence. 287

O very Lorde! o Love, o god! alas!
That knowist best min hert and al my thought,
What shal my soroufull life done in this caas
If I forgo that I so dere have bought?
Sens ye Creseide and me have fully brought
Into your grace, and both our hertis seled,
How maie ye suffre', alas! it be repeled? 294

What I may done I shal, while I may dure
On live, in turment and in cruill paine;
This infortune and this disavinture
Alone as I was borne I wol complaine,
Ne nevir wol I sene it shine or raine,
But ende I wol as Edippe in derknesse
My wofull life, and dyin in distresse. 301

O wery gost! that errist to and fro,
Why n'ilt thou flien out of the wofullest
Body that evir might on grounde ygo?
O soulè! lurking in this woful neste,
Flee forth anon, and do mine herte to breste,
And folowe Creseidè thy lady dere;
Thy right place is no lengir to ben here. 308

O woful eyin two! sens your disporte
Was al to sene Creseid's eyin bright,
What shal ye done, but for my discomforte
Stondin for naught and wepin out your sight,
Sens she is queint that wont was you to light?
In veine from this forth have I eyin twey
Iformid, sens your vertue is awey. 315

O my Creseidè! o lady sovèraine!
Of this sorowfull soulè that thus crieth
Who shal now yevin comfort to thy paine?
Alas! no wight; but whan mine hert ydieth
My spirite, whiche that so unto you hieth,
Receve in gre, for that shall aie you serve;
Forthy no force is though the body sterve. 322

O ye lovirs! that high upon the whele
Ben sette of Fortune, in gode avinture
God lene that ye aie findin love of stele,
And longè mote your life in joy endure,
But when ye comin by my sepulture
Remembrith that your selowe restith there,
For I loved eke, though I unworthy were. 329

O olde unwholsome and mislivid man,
Calchas I mene! alas! what eilid the
To ben a Greke sens thou art borne Trojan?
O Calchas! whiche that wolt my banè be,
In cursid time was thou borne for me;
As wouldè blisfull Jovè for his joye
That I the had where that I would in Troie! 336

A thousande sighis hottir than the glede
Out of his brest eche aftir othir wente,
Medlid with plaintis newe, his wo to fede,
For whiche his woful teris nevir stente;
And, shortly, so his sorowes him to rente,
He woxe so mate that ne joy nor penaunce
He felith none, but lyith in a traunce. 343

Pandarus, whiche that in the parliment
Had herde what every lord and burgeis seid,
And how ful grauntid was by one assent
For Antenor to yeldin out Creseide,
Gan wel nigh wode out of his wit to breide,
So that for wo he ne wist what he mente,
But in a rage to Troilus he wente. 350

A certaine knight that for the time kepte
The chambre dore undid it him anone,
And Pandarus, that ful tendirly wepte,
Into the derke chambre as ſtil as ſtone
Towarde the bedde gan ſoftly for to gone,
So confuſe that he ne wiſt what to ſay;
For very wo his witte was nigh away. 357

And with his chere and loking al to torne
For wo of this, and with his armis folden,
He ſtode this woful Troilus beforne,
And on his pitous face he gan beholden;
But Lord! ſo oftin gan his hert to colden,
Seyng his frende in wo, whoſe hevineſſe
His hertè ſlough, as thought him, for diſtreſſe. 364

This woful wight, this Troilus, that felte
His frende Pandare icomin him to ſe,
Gan as the ſnow ayenſt the ſunne to melte,
For whiche this woful Pandare of pite
Gan for to wepe as tendirly as he;
And ſpechèleſſe thus ben theſe ilkè twey,
That neithir might for ſorow o worde ſey. 371

But at the laſt this wofull Troilus,
Nigh ded for ſmert, gan breſtin out to rore,
And with a ſorowful noiſe he ſaid thus
Amonges his ſobbis and his ſighis ſore;
Lo! Pandare, I am ded, withoutin more;
Haſt thou nat herde at parliment, he ſeide,
For Antenor how loſte is my Creſeide? 378

This Pandarus, ful ded and pale of hewe,
Ful pitously answerid, and saide Yes,
As wisely were it false as it is trewe
That I have herde, and wote al how it is!
O mercy, God! who would have trowid this?
Who would have wende that in so lite a throw
Fortune our joye would havin ovirthrow? 385

For o! in this world there is no creture,
As to my dome, that evir sawe ruine
Straungir then this through case or awinture;
But who may al eschue or al devine?
Suche is this world. Forthy I thus define,
Ne truslith no wight to finde in Fortune
Aie propertie; her yestis ben commune. 392

But tel me this, why thou art now so mad,
To sorowen thus why liste thou in this wise,
Sens thy desire al wholly hast thou had,
So that by right it ought inough suffice?
But I, that nevir felte in my service
A frendly chere or loking of an eye,
Let me thus wepe and wailin til I dye. 399

And ore al this, as thou wel wost thy selve,
This toune is ful of ladies al aboute,
And to my dome fairir than suchè twelve
As er she was shall I finde in a route,
Ye, one or twey, withoutin any doute:
Forthy be glade, mine ownè derè brother!
If she be lost we shal recovre' an other. 406

What! God forbid alway that eche plesaunce
In o thing were, and in non othir wight;
If one can singe anothir can wel daunce,
If this be godely she is glad and light,
And this is faire and that can gode aright;
Eche for his vertue holdin is full dere
Bothe heroner and faucon for rivere. 413

And eke, as writ Zansis, that was full wise,
The newè love out chasith oft the old,
And upon newe case lyith newe avise;
Thinke eke thy self to savin thou art hold;
Soche fire by processe shall of kindè cold,
For sens it is but casuell plesaunce
Some case shal put it out of remembraunce. 420

For all so sure as daie cometh aftir night
The newè love, labour, or othir wo,
Or ellis seldè seing of a wight,
Doen old affections all ovir go;
And for thy part thou shalt have one of tho
To abredge with thy bittir painis smerte;
Absence of her shall drive her out of herte. 427

These wordis saied he for the nonis all
To helpe his frende, lest he for sorowe deide,
For doubtèlesse to doen his wo to fall
He ne raught nat what unthrift that he seide;
But Troilus, that nigh for sorowe deide,
Toke little hede of all that ere he ment;
One ere it herd, at the' othir out it went. 434

But at the laſt he anſwerde, and ſaid, Frend,
This lechcraft, or yhelid thus to be,
Were well ſitting if that I were a fend,
To traiſin her that true is unto me;
I praie God let this counſaile nevir the,
But doe me rathir ſterve anon right here
Er I thus doen as thou me wouldiſt lere. 441

She that I ſerve iwis, what ſo thou ſeie,
To whom mine herte enhabite is by right,
Shall have me wholly her's till that I deie;
For, Pandarus, ſens I have trouth her hight
I woll nat ben untrue for any wight,
But as her man I woll aie live and ſterve,
And nevir wolle non othir creture ſerve. 448

And there thou ſaieſt thou ſhalt as faire yfind
As ſhe, let be; make no compariſon
To a creture iformid here by Kinde;
O leve, Pandarus! thy concluſion;
I woll nat ben of thine opinion
Touching all this, for whiche I the beſeche
So holde thy pece; thou ſlaeſt me with thy ſpeche. 455

Thou biddiſt me that I ſhould love another
All freſhly newe, and let Creſeidè go;
It lithe nat in my powir, levè brother,
And though I might yet would I nat doe ſo:
But canſt thou playin raket to and fro,
Nettle' in Docke out, now this now that, Pandare?
Now foulè fall her for thy wo that care! 462

Thou fariſt eke by me, thou Pandarus,
As he that whan a wight is wo bigon
He cometh to him apace and ſaith right thus,
Thinke not on ſmert and thou ſhalt felè none.
Thou maieſt me firſt tranſmewin in a ſtone,
And reve me of my paſſionis all,
Or thou ſo lightly do my wo to fall. 469

The deth maie well out of my breſt depart
The life, ſo long maie laſt this ſorowe mine,
But fro my ſoulè ſhall Creſeid'is dart
Out nevirmore, but doune with Proſerpine,
Whan I am dedde, I woll go won in pine,
And there I woll eternally complain
My wo, and how that twinnid be we twain. 476

Thou haſt here made an argument full fine,
How that it ſhouldin laſſè pain ybe
Creſeidè to forgon, for ſhe was mine,
And lived in eſe and in felicite:
Why gabbiſt thou, that ſaidiſt erſt to me
That him is wors that is fro wele ithrowe
Than he had erſt none of that wele iknowe? 483

But tel me now, ſens that the thinketh ſo light
To chaungin ſo in love aie to and fro,
Why haſt thou nat doen buſily thy might
To chaungin her that doeth the al thy wo?
Why n'ilt thou let her fro thine hertè go?
Why n'ilt thou love anothir lady ſwete,
That maie thine hertè ſettin in quiete? 490

If thou haſt had in love aie yet miſchaunce,
And canſt it not out of thine hertè drive,
I that have lived in luſt and in pleſaunce
With her, as moche as any wight on live,
How ſhould I that foryet, and that ſo blive?
O! where haſt thou ben hid ſo long in mewe
That canſt ſo well and formèliche argewe? 497

Naie, Pandarus, naught worth is all thy rede,
But doutèleſs for ought that may befall,
Withoutin wordis mo, I woll ben dede.
O Deth! that endir art of forowes all,
Come now, ſens I ſo oft aftir the call,
For ſely is that deth, ſoth for to ſain,
That oft iclepid cometh and endith pain. 504

Well wote I, while my life was in quiete,
Er thou me ſlue I would have yevin hire,
But now thy comming is to me ſo ſwete
That in this worlde I nothing ſo deſire:
O Deth! ſens with this forowe I'am afire
Thou eithir doe me' anon in teris drenche
Or with thy coldè ſtroke mine hertè quenche. 511

Sens that thou ſlaeſt ſo ſele in ſondry wiſe
Ayenſt ther will, unprayid, daie and night,
Doe me at my requeſtè this ſervicè,
Deliver now the worlde, ſo doeſt thou right,
Of me, that am the ſorowfulliſt wight
That evir was, for time is that I ſterve
Sens in this world of right naught do I ſerve. 518

This Troilus in teris gan distill,
As licour out of a limbeck full fast,
And Pandarus gan hold his tongè still,
And to the ground his eyin doune he cast,
But nathèlesse thus thought he at the last;
What! parde rathir than my felowe deie
Yet shall I somwhat more unto him seie. 525

And sayid, Frend, sens thou hast soche distresse,
And sens the list mine argumentis blame,
Why n'ilt thou thy selvin helpe doen redresse,
And with thy manhode lettin all this game?
Go ravishe her, ne canst thou not for shame?
And eithir let her out of tounè fare
Or hold her still, and leve thy nicè fare. 532

Art thou in Troie and hast non hardiment
To take a woman whiche that lovith the,
And would her selvin ben of thine assent?
Now is nat this a nicè vanite?
Rise up anon and let this weping be,
And kith thou art a man, for in this hour
I woll ben dedde or she shall bein our. 539

To this answerde him Troilus full soft,
And saied, Iwis, my leve brothir dere!
All this have I my self yet thought full oft,
And more thingis than thou devisist here,
But why this thing is laft thou shalt well here,
And whan thou hast me yevin audience
Therafter maiest thou tell all thy sentence. 546

First, sin thou wost this toun hath al this werre
For ravishing of women so by might,
It should not ben ysoffrid me to erre,
As it stont now, ne doen so grete unright;
I should have also blame of every wight
My fathir's graunt if that I so withstode,
Sens she is chaungid for the toun'is gode. 553

I have eke thought, so it were her assent,
To aske her of my fathir of his grace,
Than thinke I this were her accusement,
Sens well I wot I maie her not purchace;
For sens my fathir in so high a place
As parliment hath her eschaunge enseled
He n'ill for me his lettir be repeled. 560

Yet drede I moste her hertè to perturbe
With violence, if I doe soche a game,
For if I would it opinly disturbe
It must be disclaundre unto her name,
And me were levir die than her diffame,
As n'oldè God, but if that I should have
Her honour levir than my life to save. 567

Thus am I lost, for aught that I can se,
For certain is that sith I am her knight
I must her honour levir have than me
In every case, as lovir ought of right:
Thus am I with desire and reson twight,
Desire for to distourbin her me redeth,
And reson n'ill not, so mine hertè dredeth. 574

Thus weping, that he ne could nevir cese,
He saied, Alas! how shall I wretchè fare?
For well sele I alwaie my love encrese,
And hope is lasse and lasse alway, Pandare;
Encresin eke the causis of my care;
So welawaie! why n'ill mine hertè brest?
For why? in love there is but little rest. 581

Pandare answerid, Frend, thou maiest for me
Doen as the list, but had I it so hote,
And thine estate, she should ygo with me;
Tho all this toun cried on this thing by note,
I n'oldè set all that noise at a grote,
For whan men have well cried than woll thei roun,
Eke wondir last but ix daies nere in toun. 588

Devinith not in reson aie so depe,
Ne curtisly, but helpe thy self anon;
Bet is that othir than thy selvin wepe,
And namily sens ye two ben all one:
Rise up, for by mine hedde she shall not gone,
And rathir ben in blame a little found
Than sterve here as a gnat withoutin wound. 595

It is no shame unto you ne no vice
Her to witholdin that the lovith moste;
Paravinture she might holde the for nice
To lette her go thus to the Grekis hoste:
Thinke eke *Fortune*, as well thy selvin woste,
Helpith the hardie man to his emprise,
And weivith wretchis for ther cowardise. 602

And though thy lady would alite her greve,
Thou ſhalt thy ſelf thy pece hereaſtir make;
But as to me certain I can not leve
That ſhe would it as now for evill take,
Why ſhouldè than for fere thine hertè quake?
Thinke how that Paris hath, that is thy brother,
A love, and why ſhal thou not have another? 609

And, Troilus, o thing I dare the ſwere,
That if Creſeidè, whiche that is thy leſe,
Now lovith the as well as thou doeſt here,
God helpe me ſo, ſhe n'ill not take agreſe
Though thou do bote anon in this miſchefe;
And if ſhe wilnith fro the for to paſſe
Than is ſhe falſe, ſo love her well the laſſe. 616

Forthy take hert, and thinke right as a knight,
Through love is brokin al daie every lawe;
Kith now ſomwhat thy corage and thy might;
Have mercie on thy ſelf; for any awe
Let not this wretchid wo thine hert ygnawe,
But manly ſet the worlde on ſixe and ſeven,
And if thou die a martyr go to heven. 623

I woll my ſelf ben with the at this dede,
Though I and all my kin upon a ſtound
Should in a ſtrete as doggis liggin dede,
Through-girt with many a wide blodie wound;
In every caſe I woll a frend be found;
And if the liſte here ſtervin as a wretche
Adieu, the devill ſpedè him that retche! 630

This Troilus gan with tho wordis quicke,
And ſayid, Frend, graunt mercie! I aſſent,
But certainly thou maieſt nat ſo me pricke,
Ne painè none ne maie me ſo tourment,
That for no caſe, it is not mine entent,
At ſhort wordis, though that I dyin ſhould,
To raviſh her but if her ſelf it would. 639

Why, ſo mene I (quod Pandare) al this day;
But tell me than, haſt thou her well aſſaied
That ſoroweſt thus? and he anſwerde him Naie.
Whereof art thou (quod Pandare) than diſmaied,
That n'oſte not that ſhe wol ben il apaied
To raviſhe her, ſens thou haſt not ben there,
But if that Jove the tolde it in thine ere? 644

Forthy riſe up, as naught ne were, anon,
And waſhe thy face, and to the king thou wend,
Or he maie wondrin whidir thou art gon;
Thou muſt with wiſedome him and othir blend,
Or upon caſe he maie aftir the ſend
Or thou be ware: and, ſhortly, brothir dere!
Be glad, and let me werke in this mattere; 652

For I ſhall ſhape it ſo that ſikirly
Thou ſhalt this night ſomtime in ſome manere
Come ſpekin with thy ladie privily,
And by her wordis, eke as by her chere,
Thou ſhalt full ſone aperceve and well here
Of her entent, and in this caſe the beſt;
And fare now well, for in this poinct I reſt. 658

The ſwiftè Famè, whiche that fals thingis
Equall reportith like the thingis true,
Was throughout Troie ifled with preſt wingis
Fro man to man, and made his tale all newe,
How Calchas doughtir with her brightè hewe
At parliment, withoutin wordis more,
Igrauntid was in chaunge of Antenore. 665

The whichè tale anon right as Creſeide
Had herd, ſhe, whiche that of her fathir rought
(As in this caſe) right naught, ne whan he deide,
Full buſily to Jupiter beſought
Yeve him miſchauncè that this tretis brought:
But, ſhortly, leſt theſe talis ſothè were
She durſt at no wight aſkin it for fere. 672

As ſhe that had her hert and all her minde
On Troilus iſet ſo wondir faſt
That all this world ne might her love unbind
Ne Troilus out of her hertè caſt,
She would ben his while that her life maie laſt;
And ſhe thus brennith bothe in love and drede
So that ſhe ne wiſt what was beſt to rede. 679

But as men ſene in toune and all about,
That women uſe ther frendis to viſite,
So to Creſeide of women came a rout
For pitous joie, and wendin her delite,
And with ther talis, dere inough a mite,
Theſe women, whiche that in the cite dwell,
Thei ſet 'hem doune, and ſaied as I ſhall tell. 686

(Quod firſt that one) I am glad truily
Bicauſe of you, that ſhall your fathir ſe.
Anothir ſaied, Iwis ſo am not I,
For all to little hath ſhe with us be.
(Quod tho the thirde) I hope iwis that ſhe
Shall bringin us the pece on every ſide,
That whan ſhe goth Almightie God her gide! 693

Tho wordis and tho womanniſhe thingis
She herd 'hem right asthough ſhe thennis were,
For God it wote her herte on othir thing is;
Although the body ſat emong 'hem there
Her advertence is alwaie ellis where;
For Troilus full faſt her foulè ſought;
Withoutin worde on him alwaie ſhe thought. 700

Theſe women that thus wendin her to pleſe
Aboutin naught gon all ther talis ſpende;
Soche vanite ne can doen her none eſe,
As ſhe that all this menè whilè brende
Of othir paſſion than thei ywende,
So that ſhe felte almoſte her hertè die
For wo, and werie of that companie. 707

For whichè might ſhe no lengir reſtrain
Her teris, thei ganin ſo up to well,
That gavin ſignis of her bittir pain
In whiche her ſpirite was and muſt ydwell,
Remembring her from heven unto which hel
She fallin was ſens ſhe forgo the ſight
Of Troilus, and ſorowfully ſhe ſight. 714

And thilkè folis ſitting her about
Wendin that ſhe had wept and ſighid ſore
Bicauſe that ſhe ſhouldin out of the rout
Departin, and nevir plaie with 'hem more;
And thei that haddin knowin her of yore
Se her ſo wepe, and thought it was kindneſſe,
And eche of 'hem wept eke for her diſtreſſe. 721

And buſilie thei gonnin her comforte
On thing God wot on which ſhe little thought,
And with ther talis wendin her diſporte,
And to be glad thei oftin her beſought;
But ſoche an eſe therwith thei in her wrought
Right as a man is eſid for to fele
For ache of hedde to clawen' him on his hele. 728

But after all this nicè vanite
Thei toke ther leve, and home thei wentin all;
Creſeidè, full of ſorowfull pite,
Into her chambre' up went out of the hall,
And on her bedde ſhe gan for dedde to fall,
In purpoſe nevir thennis for to riſe,
And thus ſhe wrought, as I ſhall you deviſe. 735

Her owndid heer, that ſonniſhe was of hewe,
She rent, and eke her fingirs long and ſmale
She wrong ful oft, and bade God on her rue,
And with the death to doe bote on her bale;
Her hewè, whilom bright, that tho was pale,
Bare witneſſe of her wo and her conſtreint,
And thus ſhe ſpake, ſobbing in her compleint: 742

Alas! (quod ſhe) out of this regioun
I, wofull wretche and infortunid wight,
And borne in curſid conſtellacioun,
Mote gon, and thus departin fro my knight!
Wo worthe, alas! that ilke day is light
On which I ſawe him firſt with eyin twain
That cauſith me and I him all this pain! 749

Therwith the teris from her eyin two
Doune fell as ſhouris full in Aprill ſwithe,
Her whitè breſt ſhe bet, and for the wo
Aftir the deth ſhe cried a thouſande ſithe,
Sens he that wont her wo was for to lith
She mote forgon, for whiche diſavinture
She helde her ſelfin a forloſt creture. 756

She ſaied, How ſhall he doen and I alſo!
How ſhould I live if that I from him twin!
O derè herte eke, that I lovè ſo,
Who ſhall that ſorowe ſlaen that ye ben in!
O Calchas, fathir! thine be all this ſin!
O mothir mine, that clepid wer Argive,
Wo worth that daie that thou me bare on live! 763

To what fine ſhould I live and ſorowen thus?
How ſhould a fiſhe withoutin watir dure?
What is Creſeidè worth from Troilus?
How ſhould a plant or' any othir creture
Livin withoute his kindly noriture?
For whiche full oft a byword here I ſeie,
That erthèleſs mote grene medis ſone deye. 770

I shall doen thus, sens neither swerd ne dart
Dare I none handle for the cruilte,
That ilkè daie that I fro you depart,
If sorowe of that n'ill nat my bane be,
Than shall no mete ne drinke ycome in me
Till I my soule out of my brest unsheth,
And thus my selvin woll I doen to deth. 777

And, Troilus, my clothis everichone
Shull blackè ben, in tokining, hertè swete!
That I am as out of this worlde agone
That wont ywas you to set in quiete,
And of minè ordir aie, till deth me mete,
The observaunce evir in your absence
Shall sorowe ben, complaint and abstinence. 784

Mine hertè, and eke the wofull ghost therein,
Biqueth I with your spirite to complain
Eternally, for thei shall nevir twin;
For though in yerth ytwinnid be we twain,
Yet in the felde of pite, out of pain,
That hight Elysium, we shall ben yfere,
As Orpheus and Eurydice his fere. 791

Thus, hertè mine! for Antenor, alas!
I sone shall be ychaungid, as I wene;
But how shull ye doen in this wofull caas?
How shall your tendir hertè thus sustein?
But, hertè mine! foryet this sorowe and tene,
And me also; for, sothly for to seie,
So ye well fare I retche not for to deie. 798

How might it evir redde ben or isong
The plaintis that she made in her distresse?
I n'ot, but as for me, my little tong,
If I discrivin would her hevinesse,
It should ymake her sorowe seme lesse
Than that it was, and childishly deface
Her hie complaint, and therfore I it pace. 805

Pandarus, whiche that sent from Troilus
Was to Creseide, as ye have herd devise,
That for the best it was accordid thus,
And he full glad to doen him that service
Unto Creseide in a full secrete wise,
There as she laie in tourment and in rage,
Came her to tell all wholly his message; 812

And fonde that she her selvin gan to trete
Full pitoully, for with her salte teres
Her brest and face ibathid was full wete,
Her mightie tressis of her sonnishe heres
Unbroidin hangin all about her eres,
Whiche yavin him very signall mattire
Of deth, whiche that her herte gan desire. 819

Whan she him sawe she gan for sorowe anon
Her tery face atwixt her armis hide,
For whiche this Pandare is so wo bigon
That in the hous he might unneth abide,
As he that felt sorowe on every side,
For if Creseide had erst complainid sore
Tho gan she plain a thousande timis more, 826

And in her aspre plaintè thus she seide;
Pandare, my eme, of joyis mo than two
Was cause, causing first to me Creseide,
That now transmutid bin in cruil wo,
Wher' shall I saie to you welcome or no,
That aldirfirst me brought unto servise
Of love, alas! that endith in soche wise? 833

Endith than love in wo? ye, or men lieth,
And every worldly blisse, as thinkith me;
The ende of blisse aie sorowe occupieth;
And who so trowith not that it so be
Let him upon me wofull wretchè se,
That my self hate, and aie my birthè curse,
Feling alwaie fro wicke I go to worse. 840

Whoso me seeth seeth sorowe all atonis,
Paine, turment, wo, and plaint, and eke distress;
Out of my wofull bodie harme there none is,
As langour, anguishe, cruill bittirnesse,
Annoie, smarte, drede, furie, and eke sikneſſe:
I trowe iwis from hevin teris rain
For pite of my aspre' and cruill pain. 847

O thou my sustir! full of discomfort,
(Quod Pandarus) what thinkist thou to doe?
Why ne' hast thou to thy selvin some resport?
Why wilt thou thus thy self, alas! fordo?
Leve all this werke, and take now hede to
That I shall sain, and herken' of gode entent
This that by me thy Troilus the sent. 854

Tournid her tho Creseide a wo making
So grete, that it a deth was for to se:
Alas! (quod she) what wordis maie ye bring,
What woll my dere herte sendin unto me,
Whiche that I dredè nevir more to se?
Woll he have plaint or teris er I wende?
I have inough if he theraftir sende. 861

She was right soche to sene in her visage
As is that wight that men on bere ybinde,
Her face, like of paradis the image,
Was all ichaungid in anothir kinde;
The plaie, the laughtir, men wer wont to find
In her, and eke her joyis everichone,
Ben fledde; and thus lieth Creseidè alone. 868

About her eyin two a purpre ring
Bitrent, in sothfast tokening of her pain,
That to behold it was a dedly thing,
For whiche Pandarus ne might nat restrain
The teris from his eyin for to rain;
But nathèlesse as he best might he seide
From Troilus these wordis to Creseide: 875

Lo! nece, I trowe well ye han herd all how
The King, with othir lordis, for the best
Hath made eschaunge of Antenor and you,
That cause is of this sorowe and unrest,
But how this case doth Troilus moleste
This maie none yerthly mann'is tong ysaie;
For very wo his wit is all awaie: 882

For whiche we have so sorowed he and I,
That into little it had bothe us slawe,
But through my counsaile this daie, finally,
He somwhat hath fro weping him withdrawe,
And semith me that he desirith sawe
With you to ben all night, for to devise
Remedie' of this, if there were any wise. 889

This, short and plain, th' effect of my message,
As ferforthe as my wit can comprehende,
For ye that ben of tourment in soche rage
Maie to no long prologue as now entende,
And hereupon ye maie answere him sende;
And for the love of God, my necè dere!
So leve this wo or Troilus be here. 896

Grete is my wo, (quod she) and sighid sore,
As she that felith dedly sharpe distresse,
But yet to me his sorowe' is mokill more,
That love him bet than he himself I gesse.
Alas! for me hath he soche hevinesse?
Can he for me so pitously complain?
Iwis this sorowe doublith all my pain. 903

Grevous to me, God wot, it is to twin,
(Quod she) but yet it hardir is to me
To sene that sorowe which that he is in,
For well wot I it woll my banè be,
And die I woll in certain tho (quod she:)
But bid him come er Deth that thus me threteth
Drive out that ghost which in min hert ybeteth. 910

Thefe wordis faied, fhe on her armis two
Fill gruffe, and gan to wepin pitoufly.
(Quod Pandarus) Alas! why doe ye fo,
Sens ye well wote the time is faftè by
That he fhall come? arife up haftily,
That he you nat biwopin thus yfinde,
But ye wol have him wode out of his minde: 917

For wift he that ye farde in this manere
He would himfelfin flea; and if I wende
To have this fare he fhould not comin here
For all the gode that Priam maie difpende,
For to what fine he would anon pretende,
That know I well; and forthy yet I feie
So leve this forowe', or, plainly, he woll deie: 924

And fhapith you his forowe for to' abredge,
And nat encrefin, lefè necè fwete!
Bethe rathir to him caufe of plat than edge,
And with fome wifedom ye his forowes bete:
What helpith it to wepin full a ftrete,
Or though ye bothe in faltè teris dreint?
Bet is a time of cure aie than of pleint. 931

I menè thus, whan I him hithir bring,
Sens ye be wife, and bothe of one affent,
So fhapith how to diftourbe your going,
Or come ayen fone aftir ye be went:
Women ben wife in fhort avifement;
And let fene how your wit fhall now availe,
And what that I maie help it fhall nat faile. 938

Go, (quod Creseide) and, uncle, truily
I shall doen all my might me to restrain
From weping in his sight, and busily
Him for to glad I shall doen all my pain,
And in my hertè sekin every vain:
If to this sore there maie ben foundin salve
It shall not lacke certain on mine behalve. 945

Goth Pandarus, and Troilus he sought,
Till in a temple' he found him all alone,
As he that of his life no lengir rought,
But to the pitous goddis everichone
Full tendirly he praied and made his mone,
To doen him sone out of this worlde to pace,
For wel he thought there was non othir grace. 952

And, shortly, all the sothè for to seie,
He was so fallin in dispaire that daie
That uttirly he shope him for to deie;
For right thus was his argument alwaie,
He saied he n'as but lornè, welawaie!
For all that cometh cometh by necessite,
Thus to ben lorne it is my destine: 959

For certainly this wote I well, he saide
That foresight of the divine purveiaunce
Had sene alwaie me to forgon Creseide,
Sens God seeth every thing out of doutaunce,
And them disposith through his ordinaunce
In his meritis sothly for to be
As thei shull comin by predestine. 966

But nathèlesse, alas! whom shall I leve?
For there ben gretè clerkis many one
That destine through argumentis preve,
And some ysain that nedely there is none,
But that fre choice is yeven' us everichone.
O welawaie! so sligh arne clerkis old
That I n'ot whose opinion I maie hold. 973

For some men sain that God seeth al biforne,
Ne God maie nat decevid ben parde;
Than mote it fallin, though men had it sworne,
That purveiaunce hath sene beforne to be;
Wherfore I saie that from eterne if he
Hath wist beforn our thought eke as our dede
We have no fre choice, as these clerkis rede. 980

For othir thought nor othir dede also
Might nevir ben but soche as purveiaunce,
Whiche maie not ben discevid nevir mo,
Hath feled biforne withoutin ignoraunce;
For if there might yben a variaunce
To writhin out fro Godd'is purveying
There n'ere no prescience of thing comming; 987

But it were rathir an opinion
Uncertain, and no stedfast foreseing;
And certis that were an abusion
That God should have no perfect clere weting
More than we men, that have doutous wening:
But soche an errour upon God to gesse
Were false and foule, and wickid cursidnesse. 994

Eke this is an opinion of some
That have ther top ful high and smoth ishore,
Thei sain right thus, that thing is nat to come
For that the prescience hath sene before
That it shal come, but thei sain that therfore
That it shall come, therfore the purveiaunce
Wote it beforne withoutin ignoraunce. 1001

And in this manir this necessite
Retournith in his place contrary' againe,
For nedefully behovith it nat be
That thilkè thingis fallin in certaine
That ben purveyed, but nedefully', as thei saine,
Behovith it that thingis which that fall
That thei in certaine ben purveyid all: 1008

I mene as though I laboured me in this
To enquire which thing cause of which thing be,
As whethir that the prescience of God is
The certaine cause of the necessite
Of thingis that to comin be parde,
Or if necessite of thing coming
Be the cause certaine of the purveying. 1015

But nowe ne' enforce I me not in shewing
How the' ordir of the causis stant, but wot I
That it behovith that the befalling
Of thingis wistè before certainly
Be necessarie, al seme it not therby
That prescience put falling necessayre
To thing to come, al fal it foule or faire: 1022

For if there sit a man yonde on a se,
Than by necessite behowith it
That certis thine opinion sothe be
That wenist or conjectist that he sit;
And furthirovir now ayenwarde hit,
Lo! right so is it on the part contrarie,
As thus; now herkin, for I wol nat tarie: 1029

I say that if the opinion of the
Be sothe for that he sit, than say I this,
That he mote sittin by necessite,
And thus necessite in eithir is;
For in him nede of sitting is iwis,
And in the nede of sothe; and thus forsothe
There mote necessite ben in you bothe. 1036

But thou maist saine, the man sit nat therfore
That thine opinion of his sitting soth is,
But rathir for the man sate there before,
Therfore is thine opinion sothe iwis:
And I say, though the cause of sothe is this
Cometh of his sitting, yet necessite
Is enterchaungid bothe in him and the. 1043

Thus in the samè wise out of doutaunce
I maie wel makin, as it semith me,
My resoning of Godd'is purveyaunce,
And of the thingis that to comin be,
By whichè reson men maie wel ise
That thilkè thingis that in erthe befall
That by necessite thei comin all: 1050

For although that this thing shall come iwis,
Therfore is it purveyid certainly,
Nat that it cometh for it purveyid is;
Yet nathèlesse behoveth it nedefully
That thing to come be purveyid trewely,
Or ellis thingis that purveyid be
That thei betidin by necessite. 1057

And thus suffisith right inough certaine
For to distroie our fre choise everydell;
But now is this abusion to saine
That falling of the thingis temporell
Is cause of Godd'is prescience eternell;
Now trewily that is a false sentence
That thing to come should cause his prescience. 1064

What might I wene and I had suche a thought,
But that God purveieth thing that is to come
For that it is to come, and ellis nought?
So might I wene that thingis all and some
That whilom ben bifall and ovircome
Ben cause of thilkè soveraine purveiaunce
That forwote al withoutin ignoraunce. 1071

And ore al this yet say I more therto,
That right as whan I wote there is a thing
Iwis that thing mote nedefully be so,
Eke right so whan I wote a thing coming,
So mote it come; and thus the befalling
Of thingis that ben wiste before the tide
Thei mote not ben eschewid on no side. 1078

Than said he thus, Almighty Jove in trone!
That wottest of all this thing the sothfastnesse,
Rewe on my sorowe, and do me dien sone,
Or bring Creseide and me fro this distresse.
And while he was in al this hevinesse,
Disputing with himselfe in this matere,
Came Pandare in, and saide as ye maie here: 1085

O mighty God (quod Pandarus) in trone!
Eigh! who saw er a wise man farin so?
Why, Troilus! what thinkist thou to done?
Hast thou such lust to ben thine owne foe?
What! parde yet is not Creseide ago?
Why list the so thy selfe fordon for drede,
That in thine hed thine eyin semin dede. 1090

Hast thou nat livid many a yere beforne
Withoutin her, and farde ful wel at ese?
Art thou for her and for none othir borne?
Hath Kinde the wrought al only her to plese?
Let be, and thinke right thus in thy disese,
That in the dice right as there fallin chaunces,
Right so in love there come and gon plesaunces. 1095

And yet this is a wondir most of al
Why thou thus sorowest, seth thou wost nat yit
Touching her goyng how that it shal fal,
Ne if she can her selfe distourbin it;
Thou hast not yet assayid al her wit;
A man maie al betime his neckè bede
Whan it shal of, and sorowen at the nede. 1100

Forthy take hede of al that I shal say:
I have with her ispoke and longe ibe,
So as accordid was betwixe us twey,
And evirmore me thinkith thus, that she
Hath somwhat in her hert is privite
Wherwith she can, if I shal aright rede,
Disturbe al this of whiche thou art in drede. 1113

For which my counsel is, whan it is night
Thou to her go, and make of this an ende,
And blisful Juno, through her grete might,
Shal (as I hope) her grace unto us sende;
Mine hert seith certaine that she shal nat wende:
And forthy put thine hert a while in rest,
And holde thy purpose, for it is the best. 1120

This Troilus answerde, and sighid sore,
Thou saist right wel, and I wil do right so,
And what him list he said unto him more:
And whan that it was time for to go
Ful privily himselfe without in mo
Unto her came, as he was wont to done,
And how thei wrought I shal you tellin sone. 1127

Soth is, that when thei gonnin first to mete
So gan the paine ther hertis for to twiste
That neithir of 'hem othir mightè grete,
But 'hem in armis toke and aftir kiste;
The lasse wofull of 'hem bothe ne wiste
Wher that he was, ne mightè word out bring,
As I said erst, for wo and for sobbing. 1134

The woful teris that thei letin fal
As bittir werin, out of teris kinde,
For paine, as is ligne aloes or gal;
So bittir teris wept nat, as I finde,
The wofull Myrrha through the barke and rinde;
That in this world ther n'is so hard an hert
That n'old have rewid on ther painis smert. 1141

But whan ther wofull wery gostis twaine
Returnid ben there as 'hem ought to dwell,
And that somwhat to wekin gan the paine
By length of plainte, and ebbin gan the wel
Of ther salt teris, and the hert unswel,
With brokin voice, all horse for shright, Creseide
To Troilus these ilke wordis seide: 1148

O Jove! I die, and mercy the beseche;
Helpe, Troilus: and therwithal her face
Upon his brest she laid, and lost her speche,
Her wofull spirite from his propir place
Right with the worde away in point to pace:
And thus she lith with hewis pale and grene
That whilom fresh and fairist was to sene. 1155

This Troilus that on her gan beholde,
Cleping her name, and she lay as for ded,
Withoutin answere, and felte her limmes colde,
Her eyin throwin upwarde to her hed,
This sorouful man can now non othir rede,
But oftin time her coldè mouthe he kiste:
Where him was wo God and himself it wiste. 1162

He risith up, and long straite he her leide,
For signe of life for aught he can or may
Can he none finde in nothing of Creseide;
For whiche his songe ful oft is Welaway!
But whan he saw that speche lesse she lay,
With sorowful voice, and hert of blisse al bare,
He said how she was fro this world ifare. 1169

So aftir that he long had her complained,
His hondis wronge, and said that was to sey,
And with his teris salt her brest berained,
He gan tho teris wipin of full drey,
And pitously gan for the soule prey,
And said, O Lord! that set artin thy trone,
Rewe eke on me, for I shal folow her sone. 1176

She colde was, and withoutin sentement,
For ought he wote, for brethe yet felte he none,
And this was him a preignant argument
That she was forth out of this worlde agone;
And when he saw there was non othir wonne
He gan her linmis dresse in suche manere
As men don them that shall ben laide on bere. 1183

And aftir this with sterne and cruill herte
His swerd anon out of his sheth he twight,
Himselfe to sleen, how sore so that him smerte,
So that his soule her soule folowin might
There as the dome of Minos would it dight,
Sith Love and cruil Fortune it ne would
That in this world he lengir livin should. 1190

Than said he thus, fulfilde of high disdaine;
O cruil Jove! and thou Fortune adverse!
This al and some is, falsely have ye slaine
Creseide, and sith ye may do me no werse,
Fie on your might and werkis so diverse!
Thus cowardely ye shul me nevir winne;
There shal no deth me fro my lady twinne. 1197

For I this world, sith ye have slain her thus,
Wol let, and folow' her spirit lowe or hie;
Shal nevir lovir saine that Troilus
Dare nat for ferè with his lady die,
For certaine I wol bere her companie;
But sithe ye wol nat suffre' us livin here,
Yet suffrith that our soulis ben ifere. 1204

And thou, Cite! in whiche I live in wo,
And thou, Priam! and brethrin al isere!
And thou, my mothir! farwel, for I go,
And Atropos! make redy thou my bere,
And thou, Creseidè! o swete hertè dere!
Receve thou now my spirite, would he sey,
With swerde at hert, al redy for to dey. 1211

But as God would of swough she tho abraide,
And gan to sighe, and Troilus! she cride;
And he answerid, Lady mine, Creseide!
Livin ye yet? and let his swerde doune glide.
Ye, hertè mine! that thankid be Cupide,
(Quod she) and therwithal she forè sight,
And he began to glade her as he might; 1218

Toke her in armis two, and kiste her ofte,
And her to glad he did al his entent,
For whiche her goſt, that flickered aie alofte,
Into her wofull hert aien it went;
But at the laſte, as that her eyin glent
Aſide, anon ſhe gan his ſwerde aſpie
As it lay bare, and gan for fere to crie, 1225

And askid him why he had it out drawe?
And Troilus anon the cauſe her tolde,
And how himſelf therwith he would have ſlawe;
For whiche Creſeide upon him gan beholde,
And gan him in her armis faſt to folde,
And ſaide, O mercy, God! lo whiche a dede!
Alas! how nighe we werin bothe dede! 1232

Than if I ne hadde ſpokin, as grace was,
Ye would have ſlaine your ſelfe anon? quod ſhe.
Ye, doutileſſe. And ſhe anſwerde, Alas!
For by that ilke Lorde that made me
I n'olde a forlong waie on live have be,
Aſtir your deth, to have hen crounid quene
Of al the londe the ſunne on ſhinith ſhene; 1239

But with this ſelve ſwerde which that here is
My ſelfin I would have ſlaine (quod ſhe) tho.
But ho! for we have right inough of this,
And let us riſe and ſtraite to bedde go,
And there let us yſpekin of our wo,
For by that morter whiche that I ſe brenne
Know I ful well that day is nat far henne. 1246

Whan thei wer in ther bedde in armis folde
Naught was it like tho nightis here beforne,
For petously eche othir gan beholde,
As thei that haddin al ther blisse ilorne,
Bewailing al the daie that thei were borne,
Till at the last this wofull wight Creseide
To Troilus these like wordis seide: 1253

Lo, hertè mine! wel wote ye this, (quod she)
That if a wight alwaie his wo complaine,
And sekith nat how holpin for to be,
It n'is but folie and encrece of paine;
And sens that here assemblid be we twaine
To findin bote of wo that we ben in,
It were all time right sone for to begin. 1260

I am a woman, as ful wel ye wotte,
And as I am avisid sodainly,
So wol I tel it you while it is hotte:
Me thinkith thus, that neithir ye nor I
Ought halfe this wo to makin skilfully,
For there is art inough for to redresse
That yet is misse, and sleen this hevinesse. 1267

Soth is, the wo the whiche that we ben inne,
For aught I wote, for nothing ellis is
But for the cause that we should ytwinne;
Considrid al there n'is no more amis:
And what is than a remedy' unto this
But that we shape us sonè for to mete?
This al and some is, my dere hertè swete! 1274

Now that I shal wel bringin it aboute
To comen' ayen sone aftir that I go
Therof am I no manir thing in doute,
For dredèlesse within a weke or two
I shal ben here; and that it may be so
By allè right, and that in wordis few;
I shal you wel an hepe of wayis shewe; 1281

For whiche I woll nat makin longe sermon,
For time iloste may not recovered be,
But I wol go to my conclusion,
And to the beste in aught that I can se;
And for the love of God forgive it me
If I speke aught aienst your hert'is reste,
For trewily I speke it for the beste; 1288

Making alway a protestacion,
That in effect this thing that I shall say
N'is but to shewin you my mocion
To find unto our helpe the bestè way,
And takith it none othirwise I pray;
For, finally, what so ye me commaunde
That wol I done, for that is no demaunde. 1295

Now herkenith this: Ye have well understond
My goyng grauntid is by parliment,
So ferforth that it may not ben withstond
For al this world, as by my jugement;
And sithe there helpith none avisement
To lettin it, lette it passe out of mind,
And let us shape a bettir waie to finde. 1302

The sothe is this; the twinning of us twaine
Wol us disese and cruilly anoie,
But him behovith somtime havin paine
That servith Love, if that he wol have joie;
And sith I shal no farthir out of Troie
Than I maie ride aien on halfe a morowe
It ought the lasse causin us for to sorowe; 1309

So as I shal nat now ben hid in mewe,
That day by day, min owne herte dere!
Sens wel ye wote that it is nowe a trewe,
Ye shal ful wel al mine estate yhere,
And er that truce is done I shal ben here;
And thus have ye both Antenor iwonne
And me also. Bethe glad now if ye conne. 1316

And thinke right thus, Creseide is now agon,
But what? she shal come hastily ayen:
And whan? alas! by God, lo, right anon,
Er dayis ten, this dare I safely saine,
And than as erste shall we be bothe faine,
So as we shall togithers evis dwell,
That al this worlde ne might our blisse tell. 1323

I se that oftime, there as we ben nowe,
That for the beste, our counsaile for to hide,
Ye spekè nat with me nor I with you
In fourtènight, ne se you go ne ride;
And may ye nat ten dayis than abide,
For mine honour, in suche an avinture?
Iwis ye mowe, or ellis lite endure. 1330

Ye knowe eke howe that all my kin is here
But if that onely it my fathir be,
And eke mine othir thingis al ifere,
And namily my derè hertè ye,
Whom that I n'olde levin for to se
For al this worlde, as wide as it hath space,
Or ellis se I nevir Jov'is face. 1337

Why trowin ye my fathir in this wise
Covetith so to se me, but for drede
Leste in this toune that folkis me dispise
Bicause of him for his unhappy dede?
What wote my fathir what life that I lede?
For if he wist in Troie how wel I fare
Us nedid for my wending nat to care. 1344

Ye sene that every day eke more and more
Men trete of pece, and it supposid is
That men the Quene Helena shal restore,
And Grekis us restore that is amis;
So though there ne were comfort none but this,
That men purposin pece on every side,
Ye may the bett at ese of herte abide: 1351

For if that it be pece, mine hertè dere!
The nature of the pece mote nedis drive
That men must entrecommunin ifere,
And to and fro eke ride and gone as blive
Al day as thicke as been flien from an hive,
And every wight have liberty to bleve
Where as him list the bet withoutin leve. 1358

And though so be that pece ther maie be none,
Yet hither, though ther nevir pece ne were,
I must ycome, for whidir should I gone?
Or how, mischaunce! should I dwellin there
Among tho men of armis evre in fere?
For whiche, as wisely God my soule rede,
I can nat sene wherof ye shouldin drede. 1365

Have here anothir way, if it so be
That al this thing ne maie you not suffice:
My fathir, as ye knowin wel parde,
Is holdin olde and ful of covitise,
And I right nowe have foundin al the gise
Withoutin nette wherwith I shal him hent,
And herkenith now if that ye wol assent. 1372

Lo! Troilus, men saine full harde it is
The wolse ful and the wedir whole to have;
This is to saine, that men full oft iwis,
Mote spendin parte the remnant for to save;
For aie with golde men maie the hert ygrave
Of him that is set upon covitise;
And how I mene I shal it you devise. 1379

The movable whiche I have in this toune
Unto my fathir shal I take, and saie,
That right for trust and for salvacioun
It sent is from a frende of his or twaie,
The which frendis do fervently him praie
To sendin aftir more, and that in hie,
While that this toun stant thus in jeopardie; 1386

And that shal be of golde huge quantite;
Thus shal I sain, but left folke it aspide
This maie be sent by no wight but by me:
I shal eke shewin him, if pece betide,
What frendis that I have on every side
To doe the wrathe of Priamus to pace
Towardis him, and don him stand in grace. 1393

So what for o thing and for othir, swete!
I shal him so enchauntin with my sawes
That right in hevin his soule shal he mete;
For al Apollo or his clerkis lawes,
Or calculing, availith nat thre hawes;
Desire of golde shal so his soule blende
That as me lifte I shall wel make an ende. 1400

And if he would aught by his sort it prove
If that I lie, in certaine I shal fonde
Disturbin him, and plucke him by the sleve,
Makin his sorte, and berin him on honde,
He hath nat wel the goddis undirstonde,
For goddis speke in amphibologies,
And for o sothe thei tellin twenty lies: 1407

Eke dredè sond first goddis, I suppose,
Thus shal I saine, and that his cowarde herte
Made him amis the goddis text to glose
Whan he for ferdè out of Troiè sterte;
And but I makin him sone to converte,
And done my rede within a day or twey,
I wol to you obligè me to dey. 1414

And trewily, as writtin wel I finde,
That al this thing was faid of gode entent,
And that her hertè trewè was and kinde
Towardis him, and fpake right as fhe ment,
And that fhe ftarfe for wo nigh when fhe went,
And was in purpofe evir to be trewe,
This writin thei that of her werkis knewe. 1421

This Troilus, with hert and eris fprad,
Herde al this thing devifid to and fro,
And verily it femid that he had
The felvin witte, but yet to let her go
His hertè misforyave him evirmo;
But finally he gan his hertè wreft
To truftin her, and toke it for the beft; 1428

For whiche the grete fury of his penaunce
Was queint with hope, and therwith 'hem bitwene
Began for joyè the amorous daunce;
And as the birdis when the funnè fhene
Delitin in ther fonge in levis grene,
Right fo the wordis that thei fpake ifere
Delitin them, and made ther hertis chere. 1435

But nathèlefe the wending of Crefeide
For al this world may nat out of his minde,
For whiche ful oft he petoufly her preide
That of her hefte he might her trewe yfinde,
And faide her, Certis if ye be unkinde,
And but ye come at daie fet into Trole,
Ne fhal I nere have hele, honor, ne joie: 1442

For all so sothe as sunne uprist to morow,
And God so wisely thou me wofull wretche
To rest ybring out of this cruil sorow,
I wol my selvin sle if that ye dretche;
But of my deth though litil be to retche,
Yet er that ye me causin so to smerte
Dwel rathir here mine ownè dere swete herte! 1449

For trewily, mine ownè lady dere!
The sleightis yet that I have herd you stere
Ful shapely ben to fallin al ifere,
For thus men saith, *That one thinkith the here,*
But al anothir thinkith the ledere:
Your sire is wise, and said is out of drede
Men may the wise outrenne and nat outrede. 1456

It is full harde to haltin unespied
Before a crepil, for he can the crafte;
Your fathir is in sleight as Argus eied,
For al be' it that his movble' is him birafte
His oldè sleight is yet so with him lafte
Ye shal not blende him for your womanhede,
Ne faine aright, and that is al my drede. 1463

I n'ot if pece shall evirmo betide,
But pece or no, for ernest ne for game,
I wote sith Calchas on the Grekis side
Hath onis ben, and lost so foule his name,
He dare no more come here ayen for shame,
For whiche that we, for ought I can espy,
To trustin on n'is but a fantasie. 1470

Ye shal eke sene your fathir shall you glose
To ben a wife, and, as he can wel preche,
He shal some Greke so prese and wel alose,
That ravishin he shal you with his speche,
Or do you done by force, as he shal teche,
And Troilus, on whom you n'il have routh,
Shal causeleſſe so stervin in his trouth. 1477

And ore al this your fathir shal dispise
Us al, and saine this cite is but lorne,
And that th' assegè nevir shal arise;
For why? the Grekis have it allè sworne,
Til we ben slaine and doun our wallis torne:
And thus he shal you with his wordis fere,
That aie drede I that ye wol blevin there. 1484

Ye shall eke sene so many' a lusty knight
Among the Grekis, ful of worthineſſe,
And eche of 'hem with hertè, wit, and might,
To plesin you done al his busineſſe,
That ye shull dullin of the rudineſſe
Of us the sely Trojans, but if routhe
Remordin you or vertüe of your trouthe. 1491

And this to me so grevouse is to thinke
That fro my breſt it wol my soulè rende,
Ne dredèleſſe in me there may nat sinke
O gode opinion if that ye wende;
For why? your fathir's sleightis wol us shende:
And if ye gone, as I have tolde you yore,
So thinke I n'am but ded withoutin more: 1498

For which with humble, true, and pitous, hert
A thousande timis mercie I you praie,
So rewith on mine aspre painis smert,
And doth sommwhat as that I shal you saie,
And let us stele away betwixt us twaie,
And thinke that foly is whan a man maie chese
For accident his subsiaunce for to lese. 1505

I menè thus, that sens we mowe or daie
Well stele awaie, and ben togither so,
What wit were it to puttin in assaie
(In case ye shouldin to your fathir go)
If that ye mightin come aien or no?
Thus mene I, that it were a grete folie
To put that sikirnesse in jeopardie. 1512

And, vulgarly to spekin of substaunce,
Of tresour may we bothè with us lede
Ynough to live in honour and plesaunce
Untill the timè that we shall ben dede,
And thus we may eschewin all this drede;
For every othir waie ye can recorde
Mine hert iwis maie therwith nat acorde. 1519

And hardily ne dredith no poverte,
For I have kin and frendis ellis where
That though we comin in our barè sherte
Us shuldè nevir lackè ne golde ne gere,
But ben honourid while we dweltin there:
And go we anone, for as in mine entent
This is the best, if that ye wol assent. 1526

Creseidè with a sighe right in this wise
Answerid him; Iwis, my dere hert trewe!
We maie well stele away as ye devise,
And findin suche unthrifty wayis newe,
But aftirwarde ful sore it wol us rewe;
And helpe me God so at my mostè nede
As causelesse ye suffrin al this drede: 1533

For thilkè day that I for cherishing
Or drede of fathir, or for othir wight,
Or for estate, delite, or for weding,
Be false to you, my Troilus, my knight!
Saturnus doughtir Juno, through her might,
As wode as Atalanta do me dwell
Eternally in Styx, the pit of hell. 1540

And this on every god celestiall
I swere it you, and eke on eche goddesse,
On every nymph and deite infernall,
On Satyrys and Faunys more and lesse,
That halvè goddis ben of wildirnesse;
And Atropos my thred of life to brest
If I be false. Now trowe me if you lest. 1547

And thou, Simois, that as an arowe clere
Through Troie rennist aie downward to the se,
Be witnesse of this worde that said is here,
That thilkè day that I untrewè be
To Troilus, mine ownè hertè fre!
That thou returne backewarde unto thy well,
And I with body and soule sinke to hell. 1554

But that ye speke awaie thus for to go,
And lettin al your frendis, God forbede
For any woman that ye shouldin so!
And namily sens Troie hath now such nede
Of helpe; and eke of o thing takith hede,
If this were wiste, my life laie in balaunce
And your honor, God shilde us fro mischaunce! 1561

And if so be that pece hereastir take,
As al daie happith aftir angre game,
Why, Lorde! the sorow' and wo ye woldin make
That ye ne durst comin ayen for shame!
And er that ye jeopardin so your name
Beth nat to hasty in this hottè fare,
For hasty man ne wantith nevir care. 1568

What trowe ye the peple eke al aboute
Would of it say? it is ful light to' arede;
Thei woldin say, and swere it out of doute,
That love ne drave you nat to don this dede,
But luste voluptuous and cowarde drede:
Thus were al loste iwis. mine hertè dere!
Your honour, whiche that now so shinith clere. 1575

And also thinkith on mine honeste,
That flourith yet, how foule I should it shende,
And with what filth it spottid shouldè be
If in this forme I shouldè with you wende:
Ne though I lived unto the worldis ende
My name should I nevir ayenward winne: 1581
Thus were I lost, and that were routh and sinne.

And forthy ſle with reſon al this hete;
Men ſaine, *The ſuffraunt overcometh parde,*
Eke *Who ſo wol have leſe he leſe mote lete*:
Thus makith vertue of neceſſite
By pacience, and thinke that lorde is he
Of Fortune aie that naught woll of her retch,
And ſhe ne dauntith no wight but a wretch. 1589

And truſtith this, that certis, hertè ſwete!
Or Phœbus ſuſtir, Lucina the ſhene,
The Lion paſſith out of this Arite
I woll ben here withoutin any wene;
I mene, as helpe me Junò, hevin's quene,
The tenth daie, but if that deth me aſſaile,
I woll you ſene withoutin any faile. 1596

And now, ſo this be ſothe (quod Troilus)
I ſhall well ſuffre unto the tenth daie,
Sens that I ſe that nede it mote ben thus;
But for the love of God, if it be maie,
So let us ſtelin privily awaie,
For evre' in one as for to live in reſt,
Mine hertè ſaieth that it woll be the beſt. 1603

O mercie, God! what life is this? (quod ſhe)
Alas! ye ſlea me thus for very tene;
I ſe well now that ye miſtruſtin me,
For by your wordis it is well iſene:
Now for the love of Cynthia the ſhene
Miſtruſt me nat thus cauſeleſſe for routh,
Sens to be true I have you plight my trouth. 1610

And thinkith wel that somtime it is wit
To spendin a time a time for to win;
Ne parde lorne am I nat fro you yet,
Though that we ben a daie or two atwin:
Drive out the fantasies you have within,
And trustith me, and levith eke your sorow,
Or here my trouth, I wol nat live til morow: 1617

For if ye wist how sore it doeth me smerte
Ye wouldè cesse of this; for God thou wost
The pure spirite ywepith in mine herte
To sene you wepin whiche that I love most,
And that I mote gon to the Grekis hoste;
Ye, n'ere it that I wist a remedie
To come ayen right here I wouldè die. 1624

But certis I am not so nice a wight
That I ne can imaginin a waie
To come ayen that daie that I have hight,
For who maie holden' a thing that wol awaie?
My fathir naught, for all his queinte plaie;
And by my thrift my wending out of Troie
Anothir daie shall tourne us all to joie. 1631

Forthy with all mine herte I you beseke,
If that you list doen aught for my praiere,
And for the love whiche that I love you eke,
That er that I departin fro you here
That of so godo a comfort and a chere
I maie you sene that ye maie bring at rest
Mine hertè, whiche is at the poinct to brest. 1638

And ore al this I praie you, quod she tho,
Mine ownè hert'is sothfast suffisaunce!
Sith I am thine all whole withoutin mo,
That while that I am absent no plesaunce
Of othir doe me fro your remembraunce,
For I am er agast; for why? men rede
That love is thing aie full of busie drede. 1645

For in this worlde there liviith ladie none,
If that ye were untrue, as God defende!
That so betrayid were or wo begon
As I, that allè trouthe in you entende;
And doutèless if that I othir wende
I n'ere but dedde, and er ye cause yfinde
For Godd'is love so beth me naught unkinde. 1652

To this answerid Troilus, and seide,
Now God, to whom there n'is no cause iwrie,
Me glad, as wis I nevir to Creseide,
Sithe thilkè daie I sawe her first with eye,
Was false, ne nevir shall till that I die:
At short wordis, well ye maie me bileve;
I can no more; it shall be founde at preve. 1659

Graunt mercy, gode hert mine! iwis, (quod she)
And, blisful Venus! let me nevir sterve
Er I maie stonde of plesaunce in degre
To quite him well that so well can deserve,
And while that God my wit will me conserve
I shall so doen, so true I have you found,
That aie honour to me ward shall rebounde: 1666

For trustith well that your estate roiall,
Ne veine delite, nor onely worthinesse
Of you in werre or turnaie marciall,
Ne pompe, arraie, nobley, or eke richesse,
Ne madin me to rue on your distresse,
But morall vertue, groundid upon trouth,
That was the cause I first had on you routh: 1673

Eke gentle hert, and manhode that ye had,
And that ye had (as me thought) in dispite
Evèry thing that sownid into bad,
As rudènesse, and peplishe appetite,
And that your reson bridlid your delite;
This made abovin evèry creture
That I was yours, and shall while I maie dure. 1680

And this may length of yeris nat fordoe,
Ne remuable Fortunè deface,
But Jupiter, that of his might maie doe
The sorowfull be glad, so yeve us grace
Er nightis tenne to metin in this place,
So that it maie your herte and mine suffise:
And fare now well, for time is that ye rise. 1687

And aftir that thei long iplainid had,
And oft ikist, and straite in armis folde,
The daie gan rise, and Troilus him clad,
And rufully his ladie gan behold,
As he that felt of deth'is caris cold,
And to her grace he gan him recommaunde;
Where he was wo this holde I no demaunde: 1694

For mann'is hedde imaginin ne can,
Ne' entendèment considin, ne tongue tell,
The cruill painis of this wofull man,
That passin every tourment doune in hell;
For whan he sawe that she ne might ydwell,
Whiche that his soule out of his body rent,
Withoutin more out of the chambre' he went. 1701

Explicit liber quartus.

INCIPIT LIBER QUINTUS.

APROCHIN gan the fatall destine
That Jovis hath in disposicioun,
And to you angrie Parcæ, sustrin thre,
Committith to doen execucioun,
For whiche Creseidè must out of the toun,
And Troilus shall dwellin forth in pine
Till Lachesis his threde no lengir twine. 7

The goldin tressid Phœbus high on lofte
Thryis had allè with his bemis clere
The snowis molte, and Zephirus as oft
Ibrought ayen the tendin levis grene,
Sens that the sonne of Hecuba the Quene
Began to love her first, for whom his sorowe
Was all that she departin should amorowe. 14

Full redy was at primè Diomede
Creseide unto the Grekis hoste to lede,
For sorowe' of whiche she felt her hertè blede,
As she that ne wist what was best to rede:
And truly, as men in bokis rede,
Men wistè nevir woman have the care,
Ne was so lothe out of a toune to fare. 21

This Troilus withoutin rede or lore,
As man that hath his joyis eke forlore,
Was waiting on his ladie evirmore,
As she that was the sothfast croppe and more
Of all his lust or joyis heretofore;
But Troilus, now farwell all thy joie!
For shalt thou nevir sene her est in Troie. 28

Soth is, that while he bode in this manere
He gan his wo full manly for to hide,
That well unneth it sene was in his chere,
But at the yatè there she should out ride
With certain folke he hovid her to' abide,
So wo bigon, all would he not him plain,
That on his hors unneth he sate for pain. 35

For ire he quoke, so gan his hertè gnawe,
Whan Diomede on hors gan him to dresse,
And saied unto himself this ilkè sawe;
Alas! (quod he) this soule a wretchidnesse
Why suffre' I it? why n'ill I it redresse?
Were it nat bet at onis for to die
Than evirmore in langour thus to drie? 42

Why n'ill I make at onis riche and pore
To have inough to doen er that ſhe go?
Why n'ill I bring all Troie upon a rore?
Why n'ill I ſlaen this Diomede alſo?
Why n'ill I rathir with a man or two
Stele her awaie? Why woll I this endure?
Why n'ill I helpin to mine ownè cure? 49

But why he n'oldè doen ſo ſell a dede
That ſhall I ſain, and why him liſt it ſpare:
He had in herte alwaie a manir drede
Leſt that Creſeide, in rumour of this fare,
Should have ben ſlain: lo! this was al his care,
And ellis certain, as I ſayid yore,
He had it doen withoutin wordis more. 56

Creſeidè, whan ſhe redy was to ride,
Full ſorowfully ſighed, and ſaied Alas!
But forthe ſhe mote for aught that maie betide,
And forthe ſhe ritte a full ſobirly paſe;
There is none othir remedy' in this caſe:
What wondir is though that her ſore ſmert
Whan ſhe forgoith her owne ſwetè herte? 63

This Troilus in giſe of curtiſie,
With hauke on hond, and with an hugè rout
Of knightis, rode and did her companie,
Ypaſſing all the valey ferre without,
And ferthir would have riddin out of doubt
Full faine, and wo was him to gone ſo ſone,
But tourne he muſt, and it was eke ſo doen. 70

And right with that was Antenor icome
Out of the Grekis hoſte, and every wight
Was of him glad, and ſaied he was welcome;
And Troilus, all n'ere his hertè light,
He painid him with all his fullè might
Him to withholde of weping at the leſt,
And Antenor he kiſt, and made grete feſt. 77

And therwithall he muſt his leve ytake,
And caſt his eye upon her pitouſly,
And nere he rode, his cauſè for to make,
To take her by the honde all ſobirlie;
And Lorde! ſo ſhe gan wepin tendirlie,
And he full ſoft and ſlighly gan her ſeie,
Now holde your daie, and doe me not to deie. 84

With that his courſir tournid he about
With face full pale, and unto Diomede
No worde he ſpake, ne none of all his rout,
Of whiche the ſonne of Tydeus toke hede,
As he that kouthè morè than the crede
In ſoche a craft, and by the rain her heut,
And Troilus to Troie homwardis went. 91

This Diomede, that lad her by the bridell,
Whan that he ſawe the folke of Troie awaie,
Thought all my labor ſhall not ben on idell
If that I maie, for ſomwhat ſhall I ſaie,
For at the worſt it ſhortin maie our waie;
I have herd ſaie eke timis twiſè twelve
He is a fole that woll foryete him ſelve. 98

But nathèleſſe this thought he well inough,
That certainly I am aboutin naught
If that I ſpeke of love or make it tought,
For doutileſs if ſhe have in her thought
Him that I geſſe he maie not ben ibrought
So ſone awaie; but I ſhall finde a mene
That ſhe nat yet wete ſhall what that I mene. 105

This Diomede, as he that could his gode,
Whan this was doen gan fallin forth in ſpeche
Of this and that, and aſkin why ſhe ſtode
In ſoche diſeſe? and gan her eke beſeehe,
That if that he encreſin might or eche
With any thing her eſè that ſhe ſhould
Commaunde it him, and ſaid he doen it would: 112

For truily he ſwore her as a knight
That ther n'as thing with which he might her pleſe
That he n'olde doen his pain and al his might
To doen it, for to doen her herte an eſe,
And prayid her ſhe would her ſorowe' apeſe,
And ſaied, Iwis we Grekis can have joie
To honoure you as well as folke of Troiè. 119

He ſaid eke thus, I wot you thinkith ſtraunge,
No wondir is, for it is to you newe,
Th' acqueintaunce of theſe Trojans for to chaunge
For folke of Grece, which that ye nevir knewe;
But wouldè nevir God but if as true
A Greke ye ſhould emong us all yfinde
As any Trojan is, and eke as kinde. 126

And by the cause I swore you, lo! right now
To ben your frende, and help you to my might,
And for that more acqueintaunce eke of you
Have I had than anothir straungir wight,
So fro this forth I praie you daie and night
Commaundith me, how sore so that me smerte,
To doen all that maie like unto your herte: 133

And that ye me wold as your brothir trete,
And takith not my frendship in dispite;
And though your sorowes ben for thingis grete,
N'ot I nat why, but out of more respite
Mine hert hath for to' amende it grete delite,
And if I maie your harmis nat redresse
I am right sorie for your hevinesse: 140

For though ye Trojans with us Grekis wroth
Have many' a daie ben, alwaie yet parde
O god of Love in sothe we servin bothe:
And for the love of God, my ladie fre,
Whom so ye hate as beth not wroth with me,
For truily there can no wight you serve
That halfe so loth your wrathè would deserve. 147

And n'ere it that we ben so nere the tent
Of Calchas, whiche that sene us bothè maie,
I would of this you tell all mine entent;
But this enselid till anothir daie:
Yeve me your honde; I am and shall be aie,
God help me so, while that my life maie dure,
Your owne abovin everry creture. 154

Thus ſaid I nere er now to woman borne,
For God mine herte as wiſely gladè ſo
I lovid nevir woman here beforne
As paramours, ne nevir ſhall no mo;
And for the love of God be not my ſo,
All can I not to you, my ladie dere!
Complain aright, for I am yet to lere. 161

And wondrith nought, mine ownè lady bright!
Though that I ſpeke of love to you thus blive,
For I have herd or this of many'a wight
That lovid thing he nere ſaw in his live;
Eke I am not of powir for to ſtrive
Ayenſt the god of Love, but him obaie
I woll alwaie, and mercie I you praie. 168

There beth ſo worthy knightis in this place,
And ye ſo faire, that everiche of 'hem all
Woll painin him to ſtondin in your grace;
But might to me ſo faire a grace befall
That ye me for your ſervaunt wouldè call,
So lowly ne ſo truily you ſerve
N'ill none of 'hem as I ſhall till I ſterve. 175

Creſeide unto that purpoſe lite anſwerde,
As ſhe that was with ſorowe' oppreſſid ſo
That in effect ſhe naught his talis herde,
But here and there now here a worde or two;
Her thought her ſorowfull herte braſt atwo,
For whan ſhe gan her fathir ferre eſpie
Well nigh doune of her hots ſhe gan to ſie. 182

But nathèlesse ſhe thonkith Diomede
Of all his travaile and his godè chere,
And that him liſt his frendſhip to her bede,
And ſhe acceptith it in gode manere,
And woll do fain that is him lefe and dere,
And truſtin him ſhe would, and well ſhe might,
As ſayid ſhe, and from her hors ſhe' alight. 189

Her fathir hath her in his armis nome,
And twentie times he kiſt his doughtir ſwete,
And ſaied, O derè doughtir mine! welcome.
She ſaid eke ſhe was fain with him to mete,
And ſtode forth ſtill, mild, muet, and manſuete.
But here I leve her with her fathir dwell,
And forthe I woll of Troilus you tell. 196

To Troie is come this wofull Troilus
In ſorowe abovin all ſorowes ſmert,
With felon loke and with face diſpitous,
Tho ſodainly doune from his hors he ſtert,
And through his paleyſe with a ſwollin hert
To chambir went; of nothing toke he hede,
Ne none to him dare ſpeke o worde for drede. 203

And there his ſorowes that he ſparid had
He yave an iſſue large, and Deth he cride,
And in his throwis frenetike and mad
He curſith Jove, Apollo, and Cupide,
He curſith Bachus, Ceres, and Cypride,
His birthe, himſelf, his fate, and eke Nature,
And ſave his ladie evèry creture. 210

To bed he goth, and weilith there and turneth
In furie as doeth Ixion in hell,
And in this wise he nigh till daie sojourneth,
But tho began his herte alite unswell
Through teris which that gonnin up to wel,
And pitously he cried upon Creseide,
And to himself right thus he spake and seide: 217

Where is mine ownè ladie lefe and dere?
Where is her whitè brest? where is it? where?
Where ben her armis and her eyin clere
That yesterdaie this timè with me were?
Now maie I wepe alone many a tere,
And graspe about I maie, but in this place
Save a pilowe I find naught to embrace. 224

How shall I doen? whan shall she come again?
I n'ot, alas! Why let I her so go?
As wouldè God I had as tho be slain!
O herte mine, Creseidè! o swetè so!
O ladie mine! that I love and no mo,
To whom for evirmore mine herte I vowe,
Se how I die; ye n'ill me not rescowe! 231

Who seith you now, my right lodèsterre?
Who sittith now or stant in your presence?
Who can comfortin now your hert'is werre,
Now I am gon whom ye yeve audience?
Who spekith for me now in my absence?
Alas! no wight, and that is all my care,
For well wote I as ill as I ye fare. 238

How ſhould I thus ten dayis full endure
Whan I the firſt night havin all this tene?
And how ſhall ſhe eke, ſorowfull creture,
For tendirneſſe how ſhall ſhe this ſuſtene
Soche wo for me? o! pitous, pale, and grene,
Shall woxin ben her freſhe womanly face
For langour er ſhe tourne unto this place. 245

And whan he fill in any ſlombringis
Anon begin he ſhouldè for to grone,
And dremin of the dredfulliſt thingis
That might yben, as mete he were alone
In place horrible, making aie his mone,
Or metin that he was emongis all
His enemies, and in their hondis fall. 252

And therewithall his bodie ſhouldè ſterte,
And with the ſtarte all ſodainly awake,
And ſoche a tremour fele about his herte,
That of the fere his bodie ſhouldè quake,
And therewithall he ſhould a noiſe ymake,
And ſemin as though he ſhould fallin depe,
From high aloft, and than he wouldè wepe, 259

And rewin on himſelf ſo pitouſly
That wondir was to here his fantaſie;
Anothir time he ſhouldè mightily
Comfort himſelf, and ſain it was folie
So cauſèleſſe ſoche drede and wo to drie,
And eft begin his aſpre ſorowes newe,
That every man might on his painis rewe. 266

Who could tell all aright, or full discrive
His wo, his plaint, his langour, and his pine?
Nat all the men that han or ben on live:
Thou, Redir, maiest thy self full well devine
That soche a wo my wit can not define;
On idell for to write it should I swinke
Whan that my wit is werie it to thinke. 273

On hevin yet the steris werin sene,
Although full pale iwoxin was the mone,
And whitin began the horizon shene
All estwardis, as it is wont to doen,
And Phœbus with his rosie cartè sone
Gan astir that to dresse him up to fare
Whan Troilus hath sent aftir Pandare, 280

This Pandare, that of all the daie beforne
Ne might have comin Troilus to se,
Although that he on his hedde it had sworne,
For with the King Priam al daie was he,
So that it laie nat in his liberte
No where to gon, but on the morowe' he went
To Troilus, whan that he for him sent; 287

For in his herte he couldè well devine
That Troilus all night for sorowe woke,
And that he wouldè tell him of his pine;
This knewe he well inough withoutin boke;
For which to chambir streight the way he toke,
And Troilus tho sobirly he grette,
And on the bedde full sone he gan him sette. 294

My Pandarus! (quod Troilus) the sorowe
Whiche that I drie I maie not long endure;
I trowe I shall not livin till to morowe;
For whiche I would alwaies on avinture
To the devisin of my sepoulture
The forme, and of my movble thou dispone
Right as the semith best is for to doen: 301
But of the fire and flambè funèrall
In whiche my body brennin shall to glede,
And of the fest and playis Palestrall
At my vigile I praie the take gode hede
That that be well, and offir Mars my stede,
My swerde, mine helme, and, levè brothir dere!
My shelde to Pallas yeve that shinith clere; 308
The poudre' in which min hert ibrend shal turn
That praie I the thou take, and it conserve
In a vessell that men clepith an Urne,
Of golde, and to my lady that I serve,
For love of whom thus pitously I sterve,
So yeve it her, and doe me this plesaunce
To praie her kepe it for a remembraunce: 315
For well I felin by my maladie,
And by my dremis now and yore ago,
All certainly that I mote nedis die;
The oule eke whiche that hight Ascalapho
Hath astir me shright all these nightis two:
And god Merc'urie, now of me woful wretch
The soulè guide, and whan the list it fetche. 322

Pandare anſwerid and ſaied, Troilus,
My derè frende! as I have told the yore
That it is folie for to ſorowen thus,
And cauſèleſſe, for whiche I can no more,
But who ſo woll not trowin rede ne lore
I can not ſene in him no remedie,
But let him worchin with his fantaſie. 329

But, Troilus, I praie the tell me now
If that thou trowe er this that any wight
Hath lovid paramours as well as thou?
Ye, God wot, and fro many'a worthie knight
Hath his ladie forgon a fourtènight
And he nat yet made halvindele the fare;
What nede is the to makin all this care? 336

Sens daie by daie thou maieſt thy ſelvin ſe
That from his love or ellis from his wife
A man mote twinnin of neceſſite,
Ye, though he love her as his ownè life,
Yet n'ill he with himſelf thus makin ſtrife;
For well thou woſt, my levè brothir dere!
That alwaie frendis maie not ben ifere. 343

How doen this folke that ſene ther lovis wedded
By frendis might, as it betidith oft,
And ſene 'hem in ther ſpouſis bedde ibedded?
God wote thei take it wiſely faire and ſoft;
For why? gode hope halt up ther herte aloft,
And for thei can a time of ſorowe' endure;
As time 'hem hurtith a time doeth 'hem cure. 350

So ſhouldiſt thou endure, and lettin ſlide
The time, and fondè to ben glad and light;
Tenne dayis n'is not ſo long to abide;
And ſens ſhe to comin the hath behight
She n'ill her heſt brekin for any wight,
For drede the nat that ſhe n'ill finde a waie
To come ayen, my life that durſt I laie. 357

Thy ſwevines eke, and all ſoche fantaſie,
Drive out, and let 'hem farin to miſchaunce,
For thei procede of thy melancolie,
That doeth the fele in ſlepe all this penaunce:
A ſtrawe for all ſwevenis ſignifiaunce!
God helpe me ſo! I coumpt 'hem not a bene;
There wot no man aright what dremis mene. 364

For preſtis of the temple tellin this,
That dremis ben the revelacions
Of goddis, and als well thei tell iwis
That thei ben infernalle illuſions,
And lechis ſaine that of complections
Procedin thei, of faſt or glotonie:
Who wot in ſothe thus what thei ſignifie? 371

Eke othir ſain that through impreſſions,
As if a wight hath faſt a thing in minde,
That thereof comith ſoche aviſions;
And othir ſain, as thei in bokis finde,
That aftir timis of the yere by kinde
Men dreme, and that th' effect goth by the mone:
But leve no dreme, for it is nat to doen. 378

Well worth of dremis aie these olde wives;
And truly eke augurie of these foulis,
For fere of which men wenin lese ther lives,
As ravin's qualm, or schriching of these oulis,
To trowin on it bothe false and foule is:
Alas! alas! that so noble' a creture
As is a man should dredin soche ordure! 385

For whiche with all mine hert I the beseche
Unto thy self that all this thou foryeve;
And rise now up, withoutin more speche,
And let us cast how forth maie best be drive
The time, and eke how freshly we maie live
Whan she comith, the which shall be right sone;
God helpe me so the best is thus to doen. 392

Rise, let us speke of lustie life in Troie
That we have lad, and forth the time drive,
And eke of time coming us rejoie,
That bringin shall our blisse now so blive,
And langour of these twise dayis five
We shall therwith so foryet or oppresse
That well unneth it doen shall us duresse. 399

This toune is full of lordis all about,
And truis lastith all this mene while;
Go we playin us in some lustie rout,
To Sarpedon, not hennis but a mile,
And thus thou shalt the time well begile,
And drive it forth unto that blisfull morowe
That thou her se that cause is of thy sorowe. 406

Now rise, my derè brothir Troilus!
For certis it non honour is to the
To wepe, and in thy bedde to roukin thus,
For truily of o thing trust to me,
If thou thus ligge a daie, or two, or thre,
The folke wol wene that thou for cowardise
The fainist sick, and that thou darst not rise. 413

This Troilus answerde, O brothir dere!
This knowin folke that have isuffrid pain,
That though he wepe and make sorowfull chere
That felith harme and smerte in every vain
No wondir is; and though I evir plain
Or alwaie wepe I am nothing to blame,
Sens I have lost the cause of al my game. 420

But sithins of fine force I mote arise
I shall arise as sone as er I maie,
And God, to whom mine herte I sacrifice,
So sende us hastily the tennith daie,
For was there nevir foule so faine of Maie
As I shall ben whan she comith in Troie
That cause is of my tourment and my joie. 427

But whidir is thy rede, (quod Troilus)
That we maie plaie us best in all in this toun?
By God my counsaile is (quod Pandarus)
To ride and plaie us with King Sarpedoun.
So long of this thei spekin up and doun
Till Troilus gan at the last assent
To rise, and forth to Sarpedon thei went. 434

This Sarpedon, as he that honourable
Was all his live, and full of hie proweſſe,
With all that might iſervid ben on table
That deinte was, all coſte it grete richeſſe,
He fedde 'hem daie by daie, that ſoche nobleſſe,
As ſaidin bothe the moſte and eke the leſt,
Was nere er that daie wiſte at any feſt: 441

Nor in this worlde there is none inſtrument
Delicious through winde or touch on corde,
As ferre as any wight hath er iwent,
That tongè tell or hertè maie recorde
But at that feſt it was well herd acorde,
Ne' of ladies eke ſo faire a companie
On daunce er tho was never ſene with eye. 448

But what availith this to Troilus,
That for his ſorowe nothing of it rought,
But evir in one his hertè pitous
Full buſily Creſeide his ladie ſought?
On her was evir all that his herte thought,
Now this now that ſo faſt imagining
That gladin iwis can him no feſting. 455

Theſe ladies eke that at this feſtè bene,
Sens that he ſawe his ladie was awaie,
It was his ſorowe on 'hem for to ſene,
Or for to here on inſtrumentis plaie;
For ſhe that of his hert berith the kaie
Was abſent, lo! this was his fantaſie,
That no wight ſhouldè makin melodie: 462

Nor there n'as hour in all the daie or night,
Whan he was there as no man might him here,
That he ne saied, O lovesome ladie bright!
How have ye sarin sins that ye were there?
Welcome iwis, mine ownè ladie dere!
But welawaie! all this n'as but a mase;
Fortune his love entendid but to glase. 469

The lettirs eke that she of oldè time
Had him isent he would alone irede
An hundrid sithe atwixtin none and prime,
Refiguring her shape and womanhede
Within his hert, and every worde and dede
That passid was; and thus he drove to' an ende
The ferthè day, and thennis wolde he wende; 476

And saidè, Levè brothir Pandarus!
Intendist thou that we shall here byleve
Til Sarpedon wol forth conveyin us?
Yet were it fairir that we toke our leve;
For Godd'is love let us now sone at eve
Our levè take, and homwarde let us tourne,
For trewèly I n'il nat thus sojourne. 483

Pandare answerid, Be we comin hither
To fetchin fire and rennin home again?
God helpe me so I can nat tellin whither
We mightin gone, if I shal sothly saine,
There any wight is of us morè faine
Than Sarpedon; and if we hennis hie
Thus sodainly I holde it vilanie; 490

Sith that we seydin we wouldin byleve
With him a weke, and now thus sodainly
The ferthè day to take of him our leve;
He wouldè wondrin on it trewèly:
Let us holde forth our purpose fermèly,
And sens that ye behightin him to' abide
Holde forwarde now, and astir let us ride. 497

This Pandarus with mochil pine and wo
Made him to dwel; and at the wek'is ende
Of Sarpedon thei toke ther leve to go,
And on ther way they spedin 'hem to wende.
(Quod Troilus) Now, Lorde, me gracè sende
That I maie findin at mine home-comming
Creseide comin, and therwith gan he sing. 504

Ye halif wodè thought ywis Pandare,
And to him selfe ful softily he seide,
God wote refroidin may this hottè fare
Er Calcas sendè Troilus Creseide:
But nathèlesse he japid thus, and seide,
And swore iwis, his hert him wel behight
She wouldin come as sone as er she might. 511

Whan thei unto the paleis were icomen
Of Troilus thei doun of horse alight,
And to the chambre ther waie have thei nommen,
And unto timè that it gan to night
Thei spekin of Creseide the lady bright,
And astir this, whan that 'hem bothe leste,
Thei spede 'hem fro the suppir unto rest. 518

On morow' as sone as day began to clere
This Troilus gan of his slepe to' abreide,
And to Pandarus his owne brothir dere,
For love of God, ful pitously he seide,
As go we sene the paleis of Creseide,
For sens we yet maie have none othir sest
So let us sene her paleis at the lest! 525

And therwithall his meinè for to blende
A cause he fonde into the toun to go,
And to Creseid'is paleis thei gon wende;
But Lorde! this sely Troilus was wo,
Him thought his sorouful hert brast atwo,
For when he saw her doris sperrid all
Wel nigh for sorow' adoun he gan to fall. 532

Therwith when he was ware, and gan behold
How shet was every window of the place,
As frost him thought his hert began to cold,
For whiche with chaungid dedly palè face
Withoutin worde he forth by gan to pace,
And as God would he gan so fast to ride
That no wight of his countinaunce aspide. 539

Than saide he thus; O paleis desolate!
O house of housis whilom best ydight!
O paleis empty and disconsolate!
O thou lanterne, of which queint is the light!
O paleis whilom day, that now art night!
Wel oughtist thou to fal and I to die
Sens she is went that wont was us to gie. 546

O paleis whilom croune of houſis al!
Enluminid with ſunne of allè bliſſe,
O ring, of whiche the rubie is out fall!
O cauſe of wo that cauſe haſt ben of bliſſe!
Yet ſens I may no bet faine would I kiſſe
Thy coldè doris, durſt I for this route;
And farwel ſhrine of whiche the faint is out! 553

Therwith he caſt on Pandarus his eie
With chaungid face, and pitous to beholde,
And whan he might his time aright aſpie
Aie as he rode to Pandarus he tolde
His newe ſorow, and eke his joyis olde,
So pitouſly, and with ſo ded an hewe,
That every wight might on his ſorow rewe. 560

Fro thinnis forth he ridith up and doune,
And every thing came him to remembraunce
As he rode forth by placis of the toune
In whiche he whilom had all his pleſaunce;
Lo! yondir ſaw I mine owne lady daunce,
And in that temple with her eyin clere
Me captive caught firſt my right lady dere: 567

And yondir have I herde ful luſtily
My dere hert Creſeide laugh, and yondir plaie
Sawe I her onis eke ful bliſfully,
And yondir onis to me gan ſhe ſaie,
Now, gode ſwete! lovith me wel I you praye;
And yonde ſo godely gan ſhe me beholde
That to the deth mine hert is to her holde: 574

And at the cornir in the yondir houſe
Herde I mine aldirleviſt lady dere
So womanly with voice melodiouſe
Singin ſo wel, ſo godely and ſo clere,
That in my ſoule yet me thinkith I here
The blisful ſowne, and in that yondir place
My lady firſt me toke unto her grace. 581

Than thought he thus, O blisfull Lorde Cupide!
Whan I the proceſſe have in memorie
How thou me haſt weried on every ſide
Men might a boke make of it like a ſtorie;
What nede is the to ſeke on me victorie
Sens I am thine and wholly at thy will?
What joy haſt thou thine ownè folke to ſpill? 588

Wel haſt thou, Lorde, iwroke on me thine ire,
Thou mighty God, and dredful for to greve;
Now mercy, Lorde! thou woſt wel I deſire
Thy gracè moſte of allè luſtis leve,
And live and die I wol in thy beleve,
For whiche I ne' aſke in guerdon but a bone,
That thou Creſeide aien me ſendè ſone. 595

Diſtrainin her hert as faſt to returne
As thou doeſt mine to longin her to ſe,
Than wote I wel that ſhe n'il nat ſojourne;
Now blisful Lorde! ſo cruil thou ne be
Unto the blode of Troie, I praiè the,
As Juno was unto the blode Thebane,
For whiche the folke of Thebis caught ther bane. 602

And aftir this he to the yatis wente
Ther as Creseide out rode a full gode paas,
And up and doun there made he many' a wente,
And to him selfe ful oft he said, Alas!
Fro hennis rode my blisse and my solas:
As wouldè blisful God now for his joie
I might her sene ayen comin to Troie! 609

And to the yondir hil I gan her gide,
Alas! and there I toke of her my leve,
And yonde I sawe her to her fathir ride,
For sorow of whiche mine hert shal to cleve,
And hithir home I came whan it was eve,
And here I dwel, out cast from allè joie,
And shal, til I maie sene her efte in Troie. 616

And of him selfe imaginid he ofte
To ben defaitid, pale, and woxin lesse
Than he was wonte, and that men saidin softe
What may it be? who can the sothè gesse
Why Troilus hath al this hevinesse?
And al this n'as but his melancolie,
That he had of him selfe suche fantasie. 623

Anothir time imaginin he would
That evèry wight that went by the wey
Had of him routhe, and that thei sainè should
I am right sory Troilus wol dey:
And thus he drove a daie yet forth or twey,
As ye have herde: suche life gan he to lede
As he that stode betwixin hope and drede: 630

For which him likid in his ſongis ſhewe
Th' enchefon of his wo as he beſt might,
And made a ſonge of wordis but a fewe,
Somwhat his wofull hertè for to light,
And whan he was from every mann'is ſight
With ſoftè voice he of his lady dere,
That abſent was, gan ſing as ye maie here: 637

O ſterre! of whiche I loſt have all the light,
With hertè ſore wel ought I to bewaile
That evir derke in turment, night by night,
Towarde my deth with winde I ſtere and ſaile,
For whiche the tennith night if that I faile
The giding of thy bemis bright an houre
My ſhip and me Carybdis woll devoure. 644

This ſongè when he thus ſongin had ſone
He fil aien into his ſighis olde,
And every night, as was his wont to done,
He ſtodè the bright monè to beholde,
And al his ſorowe he to the mone tolde,
And ſaid, Iwis whan thou art hornid newe
I ſhal be glad if al the world be trewe. 651

I ſaw thine hornis olde eke by that morow
Whan hennis rode my bright lady dere,
That cauſe is of my turment and my ſorow,
For whichè, o bright Lucina the clere!
For love of God ren faſt about thy ſphere,
For whan thine hornis newe ginnin to ſpring
Than ſhal ſhe come that maie my bliſſe ybring. 658

The daie is more and lengir every night
Than thei ben wont to be, him thoughtè tho,
And that the ſunnè went his courſe unright
By lengir waie than it was wonte to go,
And ſaid, lwis I drede me evirmo
The ſunn'is ſonne Phaeton be on live,
And that his fathir's carre amiſſe he drive. 665

Upon the wallis faſt eke would he walke,
And on the Grekis hoſt he would yſe,
And to him ſelfe right thus he would ytalke;
Lo! yondir is mine ownè lady ſre,
Or ellis yondir there the tentis be,
And thence comith this ayre that is ſo ſote,
That in my ſoule I fele it doth me bote. 672

And hardily this winde that more and more
Thus ſtoundèmele encreſith in my face
Is of my ladies depè ſighis ſore;
I preve it thus, for in none othir ſpace
Of al this toun, ſave onely in this place,
Fele I no winde that ſounith ſo like paine,
It ſaith Alas! why twinid be we twaine? 679

This longè time he drivith forth right thus,
Til fully paſſid was the ninthè night,
And aie beſide him was this Pandarus,
That beſily did allè his full might
Him to comfort and make his hertè light,
Yeving him hope alway the tenthè morow
That ſhe ſhal comen and ſtintin al his ſorow. 686

Upon that othir side eke was Creseide
With women fewe among the Grekis strong,
For whiche ful oft a day Alas! she seide,
That I was borne! wel maie mine hertè long
Astir my deth, for now live I to long;
Alas! and I ne may it not amende,
For now is worse than evir yet I wende. 693

My father n'il for nothing do me grace
To gone ayen for aught I can him queme,
And if so be that I my termè pace
My Troilus, alas! shal in his hert deme
That I am false, and so it maie wel seme;
Thus shal I have unthonke on every side:
That I was borne so welaway the tide! 700

And if that I me put in jeopardie
To stele awaie by night, and it befal
That I be caught I shal be holde a spie,
Or ellis, lo! this drede I most of al,
If in the hondis of some wretche I fal
I n'am but lost, al be mine hertè trewe:
Now mighty God thou on my sorow rewe! 707

Ful pale iwoxin was her brightè face,
Her limmis lene, as she that al the daie
Stode whan she durst, and lokid on the place
There she was borne, and she had dwellid aye;
And al the night weping, alas! she laie;
And thus dispeirid out of allè cure
She lad her life this sorowfull creture. 714

Ful oft a daie ſhe ſighed eke for diſtreſſe,
And in her ſelfe ſhe went aie purtraying
Of Troilus the gretè worthineſſe,
And al his godely wordis recording
Sens firſt that daie her love began to ſpring;
And thus ſhe ſette her wofull hert afire
Through remembraunce of that ſhe gan deſire. 721

In all this world there n'is ſo cruil hert
That her had herd complainin in her ſorow
That n'old have wepin for her painis ſmert;
So tendirly ſhe wept both eve and morow
Her nedid not no teres for to borow;
And this was yet the worſt of all her paine,
Ther was no wight to whom ſhe durſt complaine. 728

Ful rewfully ſhe lokid upon Troie,
Behelde the touris high and eke the hallis;
Alas! (quod ſhe) the pleſaunce and the joie,
The whiche that now al turnid into gal is,
Have I had oftin within yondir wallis!
O Troilus! what doeſt thou now? ſhe ſeide;
Lord, whethir thou yet think upon Creſeide! 735

Alas! that I ne' had trowid on your lore,
And went with you, as ye me redde er this,
Than had I now not ſighid halfe ſo fore:
Who might have ſaid that I had don amis
To ſtele awaie with ſuche one as he is?
But al to late comith the lectuarie
Whan men the corſe unto the gravè carie. 742

To late is now to speke of that matere;
Prudence, alas! one of thine eyin thro
Me lackid alway er that I came here,
For on time passid wel remembrid me,
And present time eke coulde I wel yse,
But future time, er I was in the snare,
Could I not sene, that causith now my care. 749

But nathèlesse, betide what may betide,
I shal to morow' at night, by est or west,
Out of this hoste stele on some manir side,
And gon with Troilus where as him lest;
This purpose wol I holde, and this is best;
No force of wickid tongis jonglerie,
For er on love have wretchis had envie: 756

For who so wol of every worde take hede,
Or rulin him by every wight'is wit,
Ne shal he nevir thrivin out of drede,
For that that some men blamin ever yet
Lo othir manir folke commendin it;
And as for me, for al suche variaunce
Felicite clepe I my suffisaunce. 763

For whiche, withoutin any wordis mo,
To Troie I wol, as for conclusioun.
But God it wote er fully monthis two
She was ful ferre fro that entencioun,
For bothè Troilus and Troiè toun
Shall knotèlesse throughout her hertè slide,
For she wol take a purpose for to' abide. 770

This Diomede of whom I you tel gan,
Goth now within himselfe aie arguing,
With al the sleight and al that er he can,
How he maie best with shortist tarying
Into his nette Creseid'is hertè bring;
To this entent he couthè nevir fine;
To fishin her he laide out hoke and line. 777

But nathèlesse wel in his hert he thought
That she n'as nat without a love in Troie,
For nevir sithin he her thennis brought
Ne couthe he sene her laugh or makin joie;
He n'ist how best her hert for to acoie,
But for t' assey he said nought it ne greveth,
For *He that naught assayith naught atcheveth.* 784

Yet said he to him selfe upon a night,
Now am I nat a fole that wote wel howe
Her woe is for love of anothir wight
And herupon to gon assaie her nowe?
I maie well wete it n'il nat ben my prowe,
For wisè folke in bokis it expresse,
Men shal nat wowe a wight in bevinesse. 791

But who so might ywinnin suche a floure
Fro him for whom she mournith night and daie
He might wel saine he were a conqueroure;
And right anone, as he that bold was aie,
Thought in his hert, happin what happin may,
Al should I die I wol her hertè seche,
I shal no morè lesin but my speche. 798

This Diomede, as bokis us declare,
Was in his nedis prest and corageous,
With sternè voice, and mighty limmis square,
Hardy and testife, strong and chevalrous,
Of dedis like his fathir Tydeus;
And some men saine he was of tongè large,
And heire he was of Calydon and Arge. 805

Creseidè mene ywas of her stature,
Therto of shape, of face, and eke of chere,
There ne mightin ben no fairir creture;
And ostin timis this was her manere
To gone itressid with her heris clere
Doune by her colere, at her backe behinde,
Which with a threde of gold she wouldè binde. 812

And save her browis joynedin ifere
There n'as no lacke in aught I can espien;
But for to spekin of her eyin clere,
Lo! truily thei writtin that her seien
That paradis stode formid in her eien,
And with her richè beaute evirmore
Strove love in her aie which of 'hem was more. 819

She sobre was, simple, and wise withall,
The best inorisshid eke that might be,
And godely of her speche in generall,
Charitable, estately, lussy', and fre,
Ne nevirmore ne lackid her pite,
Tendrehertid, and sliding of corage,
But truily I can nat tel her age. 826

And Troilus wel woxin was in hight,
And complete, formid by proporcioun
So wel, that Kinde it naught amendin might,
Yong, fresh, and strong, and hardy as lioun,
And trewe as stele in eche condicioun,
One of the best entetchid creature
That is or shal while that the world maie dure. 833

And certainly in story it is fonde
That Troilus was nevir to no wight,
As in his time, in no degre seconde
In daring do that longith to a knight;
Al might a giaunt passin him of might
His hert aie with the first and with the best
Stode peregall to dare done what him lest. 840

But for to tellin forthe of Diomede
It fil, that aftir on the tennith daie
Sens that Creseide out of the cite yede
This Diomede, as fresh as braunche in Maie,
Came to the tentè there as Calchas laie,
And fainid him with Calchas have to done,
But what he mente I shal you tellin sone. 847

Creseidè, at shorte wordis for to tel,
Welcomid him, and doun him by her sette,
And he was ethe inough to makin dwel;
And aftir this, withoutin longè lette,
The spicis and the wine men forth 'hem fette,
And forthe thei speke of this and that ifere,
As frendis done, of whiche some shall ye here. 854

He gan first fallin of the warre in speche
Betwixin them and the folke of Troie toun,
And of th' affiege he gan eke her beseche
To tellin him what was her opinioun;
Fro that demaunde he so discendith doun
To askin her if that her straunge thought
The Grekis gise and werkis that thei wrought, 861

And why her fathir taryith so long
To weddin her unto some worthy wight?
Creseide, that was in her painis strong
For love of Troilus her owne knight,
So ferforth as she conning had or might
Answerde him tho, but as of his entente
Ne semid that she ne wist what he mente. 868

But nathèlesse this ilke Diomede
Gan on him selfe assure, and thus he seide;
If I aright have takin on you hede
Me thinkith thus, o lady mine Creseide!
That sens I first hond on your bridil leide,
When I out came of Troie by the morow,
Ne might I nevir sene you but in sorow. 875

I can nat saine what maie the cause be,
But if for love of some Trojan it were,
The whiche right sore wouldin athinkin me,
That ye for any wight that dwellith there
Shuldin yspil a quartir of a tere,
Or pitously your selvin so begile,
For dredèlesse it is nat worthe the while. 882

The folke of Troie, as who faith al and fome,
In prifon ben, as ye your felvin fe,
Fro thennis fhal nat one on livè come
For al the golde atwixin funne and fe;
Truftith wel this, and underftondith me,
There fhal nat one to mercy gone on live,
Al were he lord of worldis twifè five. 889

Such wrech on them for fetching of Heleine
There fhal be take, er that we hennis wende,
That Manes, whiche that goddis ben of Peine,
Shal ben agaft that Grekis wol'hem fhende;
And men fhal drede unto the world'is ende
From hennis forthe to ravifhe any quene,
So cruil fhal our wreche on them be fene. 896

And but if Calchas led us with *ambages*,
That is to faine, with double wordis flie,
Suche as men clepen a word with two vifages,
Ye fhal wel knowin that I do nat lie,
And al this thing right fene it with your eie,
And that anon, ye n'il nat trowe how fone;
Now takith hede, for it is for to done. 903

What! wenin ye that your wife fathir would
Have yevin Antenor for you anon
If he ne wiftè that the cite fhould
Diftroyid ben? Why, nay: fo mote I gone
He knew ful wel there fhal nat fcapin one
That Trojan is, and for the gretè fere
He durft nat that ye dwellid lengir there. 910

What wol ye more, o lovesome lady dere!
Let Troie and Trojans fro your hertè passe;
Drive out the bittir hope, and make gode chere,
And clepe ayen the beaute of your face,
That ye with saltè teris so deface,
For Troie is brought in suche a jeopardie
That it to save is now no remedie. 917

And thinkith wel ye shal in Grekis finde
A love more parfite, er that it be night,
Than any Trojan is, and morè kinde,
And bet to servin you wol don his might;
And if that ye vouchsafe, my lady bright!
I wol ben he to servin you my selve,
Ye, levir than be lorde of Grecis twelve. 924

And with that word he gan to waxin red,
And in his speche a litil while he quoke,
And cast aside a litil with his hed,
And stinte a while, and aftirwarde he woke,
And sobrely on her he threwe his loke,
And said, I am, al he' it to you no joie,
As gentle' a man as any wight in Troie: 931

For if my fathir Tydeus, he seide,
Ilivid had, tho I had ben er this
Of Calidony' and Arge a king, Creseide,
And so hope I that I shal yet iwis,
But he was slaine, alas! the more harm is,
Unhappily at Thebis al to rathe,
Polynices and many' a man to scathe. 938

But, hertè mine! sithe that I am your man,
And ye beh the first of whom I seche grace,
To servin you as hertely as I can,
And evir shal while I to live have space,
So that er I depart out of this place
Ye wol me grauntin that I maie to morow
At bettir laisir tel you of my sorow. 945

What should I tell his wordis that he seide?
He spake inough for o daie at the mest;
It previth wel he spake so that Creseide
Grauntid on the morow at his request
Forthy to spekin with him at the leste,
So that he n'olde spekin of suche matere,
And thus she to him said, as ye mowe here, 952

As she that had her hert on Troilus
So fast yset that none might it arace,
And straungèly she spake, and seidè thus:
O Diomede! I love that ilkè place
There I was borne, and Jovis of thy grace
Delivre' it sone of al that doth it care:
God for thy might so leve it wel to fare! 959

That Grekis wold ther wrath on Troyè wreke,
If that thei might, I know it wel iwis;
But it shal naught befallin as ye speke,
And God toforne; and farthir ovir this
I wote, my fathir wise and redy is,
And that he me hath bought, as ye me tolde,
So dere I am to him the more yholde. 966

That Grekis ben of high condicioun
I wote eke well, but certaine men shall finde
As worthy folkè within Troiè toun,
As conning, as parfite, and eke as kinde,
As ben betwixtin Orcades and Inde;
And that ye couldin wel your lady serve
I trowe eke wel, her thonke for to deserve. 973

But as to speke of love, iwis, she seide,
I had a lorde to whom I weddid was,
The whose mine hert was al til that he deide,
And othir love, as helpe me now Pallas,
There in mine hert ne is ne nevir was;
And that ye ben of noble and high kinrede
I have wel herde it tellin out of drede. 980

And that doth me to have so gret a wonder
That ye wol scornin any woman so;
Eke God wote love and I ben fer asonder;
I am disposid bet, so mote I go,
Unto my deth to plaine and makin wo:
What I shal aftir done I can nat saie,
But truily as yet me liste nat plaie. 987

Mine hert is now in tribulacioun,
And ye in armis besy daie by daie;
Hereaftir when ye wonnin have the toun
Paravintur than so it happin maie
That whan I se that I nevir ere saie
Than wol I werke that I nevir ere wrought;
This word to you inough suffisin ought. 994

To morow eke wol I speke with you faine,
So that ye touchin nought of this matere,
And whan you list ye maie come here againe;
And er ye gon thus muche I saie you here,
As helpe me Pallas with her heris clere,
Yf that I should of any Greke have routhe
It should ybe your selvin by my trouthe. 1001

I saie nat therfore that I wol you love,
Ne saie nat naie, but, in conclusioun,
I menè wel, by God that sit above;
And therwithal she cast her eyin doun,
And gan to sigh, and saide, O Troyè toune!
Yet bidde I God in quiet and in rest
I maie the sene, or do mine hertè brest. 1008

But in effecte, and shortely for to saie,
This Diomede al freshly newe againe
Gan preasin on, and fast her mercy praie;
And aftir this, the sothè for to saine,
Her glove he toke, of which he was ful faine,
And, finally, whan it was woxin eve,
And al was wel, he rose and toke his leve. 1015

The bright Venus folowid and aie taught
The waie there brodè Phœbus doune alight,
And Cytherea her chare-horse o'r raught
To whirle into the Lioun if she might,
And Signifer his candils shewith bright,
Whan that Creseidè unto her bed wente
Within her fathir'is faire brightè tente, 1022

Retourning in her soule aie up and doun
The wordis of this sodaine Diomede,
His gret estate, and peril of the toun,
And that she was alone, and haddè nede
Of frendis helpe, and thus began to drede
The causis why, the sothè for to tell,
That she toke fully purpose for to dwell. 1029

The morow came, and, gostly for to speke,
This Diomede is come unto Creseide;
And, shortly, lest that ye my talè breke,
So wel he for himselfin spake and seide
That al her sighis sore adoun he leide;
And, finally, the sothè for to saine,
He reft her of the grete of alle her pain. 1036

And astir this the story tellith us
That she unto him yave the faire baie stede
The whiche she onis wan of Troilus,
And eke a broche (and that was litil nede)
That Troilus was she yave this Diomede,
And eke the bet from sorowe' him to releve
She made him were a pencell of her sleve. 1043

I finde eke in the story ellis where,
Whan through the body hurt was Diomede
Of Troilus tho wepte she many' a tere
Whan that she saw his widè woundis blede,
And that she toke to kepin him gode hede,
And for to helin him of his woundes smerte:
Men saine, I n'ot, that she yeve him her herte. 1050

But truily the ſtory tellith us
There madin nevir woman morè wo
Than ſhe whan that ſhe falſid Troilus;
She ſaide Alas! for now is clene ago
My name in trouthe of love for evirmo,
For I have falſid one the gentilleſt
That ever was, and one the worthieſt. 1057

Alas! of me unto the world'is ende
Shall neithir ben iwrittin or iſong
No gode worde, for theſe bokis woll me ſhende;
Irollid ſhall I ben on many'a tong,
Throughout the world my bell ſhall be yrong,
And women moſte woll hatin me of all;
Alas that ſoche a caas me ſhould befall! 1064

Thei woll ſain, in as muche as in me is
I have 'hem doen diſhonour, welawaie!
All be I not the firſt that did amis,
What helpith that to doen my blame awaie?
But ſens I ſe there is no bettir waie,
And that to late is now for me to rue,
To Diomede I woll algate be true. 1071

But, Troilus, ſens I no bettir maie,
And ſens that thus departin ye and I,
Yet praie I God ſo yeve you right gode daie,
As for the gentilliſt knight truily
That er I ſawe to ſervin faithfully,
And beſt can aie his ladie's honour kepe,
(And with that worde ſhe braſt anon to wepe.) 1078

And certis you ne hatin shall I never,
And frend'is love that shall ye have of me,
And my gode worde, all should I livin ever;
And truily I would right sorie be
For to sein you in adversite;
And giltilesse I wot well I you leve;
And all shall passe, and thus take I my leve. 1085

But truily how long it was bitwene
That she forsoke him for this Diomede
There is none aucthour tellith it I wene,
Take every man now to his bokis hede
He shall no termè findin out of drede,
For though that he began to wowe her sone,
Er he her wan yet was there more to done. 1092

Ne me ne list this selie woman chide
Ferthir than that the storie woll devise;
Her name, alas! is publishid so wide
That for her gilt it ought inough suffise;
And if I might excuse her in some wise,
For she so sorie was for her untrouthe,
Iwis I would excuse her yet for routhe. 1099

This Troilus, as I before havé told,
Thus drivith forth as wel as he hath might,
But oftin was his hertè hote and cold,
And namily that ilkè ninithe night
Whiche on the morowe she had him behight
To come ayen; God wote foll little rest
Had he that night; nothing to slepe him lest. 1106

The laurir-crounid Phœbus with his hete
Gan in his course aie upward as he went
To warme of the est se the wavis wete,
And Circe'is doughtir song with freshe entent,
Whan Troilus his Pandare aftir sent,
And on the wallis of the toune thei pleide,
To loke if thei can sene aught of Creseide; 1113

Till it was none thei stodin for to se
Who that there came, and every manir wight
That came fro ferre thei saidin it was she,
Till that thei couldin knowin him aright:
Now was his hertè dull, now was it light;
And thus bejapid stodin for to stare
About naught this Troilus and Pandare. 1120

To Pandarus this Troilus tho seide;
For aught I wot before none sikirly
Into this toune ne comith not Creseide,
She hath inough to doin hardily
To twinnin from her fathir, so trowe I;
Her oldè fathir woll yet make her dine
Er that she go; God yeve his hertè pine! 1127

Pandare answerd, It maie well ben certain,
And forthy let us dine, I the beseche,
And aftir none than maist thou come again:
And home thei go without in morè speche,
And comin ayen; but long maie thei seche
Er that thei findin that thei aftir gape;
Fortune 'hem bothe ythinkith for to jape. 1134

(Quod Troilus) I se well now that she
Is taryid with her old fathir so
That er she come it woll nigh evin be;
Come forthe, I woll unto the yatè go,
These portirs ben unkonning evirmo,
And I woll doen 'hem holdin up the yate
As naught ne were, although she comin late. 1141

The daie goth fast, and aftir that came eve,
And yet came nat to Troilus Creseide:
He lokith forth by hedge, by tre, by greve,
And ferre his hedde ovir the wall he leide,
And at the last he tournid him, and seide,
By God I wote her mening now, Pandare;
Almoste iwis all newe was all my care. 1148

Now doutiless this ladie can her gode;
I wote she comith riding privily;
I commendin her wisedome by mine hode;
She woll nat makin peple nicily
Gaure on her whan she cometh, but softily
By night into the toune she thinkith ride,
And, dere brothir! thinke nat long to abide. 1155

We have naught ellis for to doen iwis;
And Pandarus, now wilt thou trowin me,
Have here my trouth I se her; yond she is:
Heve up thine eyin man; maiest thou nat se?
Pandare answerid, Naie, so mote I the;
All wrong by God: what saist thou man? wher art?
That I se yonde afarre n'is but a carte. 1162

Alas! thou saiest right sothe, (quod Troilus)
But hardily it is not all for nought
That in mine herte I new rejoicè thus;
It is ayenst some gode: I have a thought,
N'ot I nat how, but sens that I was wrought
Ne felt I soche a comfort dare I saie;
She cometh to night, my life that durst I lay. 1169

Pandare answerde, it maie be well inough;
And helde with him of all that er he saied,
But in his herte he thought, and soft he lough,
And to himself full sobirly he saied,
From hasilwodde, there Joly Robin plaied,
Shall come all that that thou abidist here;
Ye, farwell all the snowe of fernè yere. 1176

The wardein of the yatis gan to call
The folke which that without the yatis were,
And badde 'hem drivin in ther bestis all,
Or all the night thei must bylevin there;
And ferre within the night, with many'-a tere,
This Troilus gan homward for to ride,
For well he seeth it helpith nat to' abide. 1183

But nathèlesse he gladdid him in this,
He thought he misaccomptid had his daie,
And saied, I understande have all amis,
For thilkè night I last Creseidè saie
She saied I shall ben here, if that I maie,
Er that the mone, o my dere hertè swete!
The Lion passe out of this Ariete: 1190

For whiche ſhe maie yet hold all her beheſt;
And on the morowe to the yate he went,
And up and doune, by weſt and eke by eſt,
Upon the wallis made he many' a went;
But al for naught; his hope alway him blent,
For which at night in ſorow and ſighes ſore
He went him home withoutin any more. 1197

This hope all clene out of his hertè fledde,
He ne' hath wheron now lengir for to hong,
But for the pain him thought his hertè bledd,
So wer his throwis ſharp, and wondir ſtrong,
For whan he ſawe that ſhe abode ſo long
He ne wiſt what he judgin of it might,
Sens ſhe hath brokin that ſhe him behight. 1204

The thirde, the fourth, the fifte, and the ſixt, daie
Aftir tho dayis tenne of whiche I told,
Betwixin hope and drede his hertè laie,
Yet ſomwhat truſting on her heſtis old;
But whan he ſawe ſhe n'olde her termis hold
He can now ſene none othir remedie
But for to ſhapin him ſone for to die. 1211

Therwith the wickid ſpirit, God us bleſſe!
Whiche that men clepin the wode Jalouſie,
Gan in him crepe in all this hevineſſe,
For whiche bicauſe he wouldin ſonè die
He ne' ete ne dronke for his melancolie,
And eke from every companie he fledde;
This was the life that all this time he ledde. 1218

He so defaite was that no manir man
Unnethis him might knowin there he went,
So was he lene and therto pale and wan,
And feble, that he walkith by potent,
And with his ire he thus himselfin shent;
But whoso askid him wherof him smerte,
He saied his harme was all about his herte. 1225

Priam full oft, and eke his mothir dere,
Hir bretherne and his sustrin, gan him frain
Why he so wofull was in all his chere,
And what thing was the cause of al his pain?
But all for naught; he n'olde his cause plain,
But saied he felt a greyous maladie
About his herte, and fain he wouldè die. 1232

So on a daie he laie him doune to slepe,
And so bifell it that in slepe him thought
That in a forest fast he walked to wepe
For love of her that him these painis wrought,
And up and doune as he that forest sought
He met he sawe a bore with tuskis grete
That slept ayenist the bright sunn'is hete; 1239

And by this bore, fast in her armis fold,
Laie kissing aie his ladie bright Creseide,
For sorowe' of whiche, whan he it gan behold,
And for dispite, out of his slepe he breide,
And loude he cried on Pandarus, and seide,
O Pandarus! now knowe I crop and rote
I n'am but dedde; there n'is none othir bote. 1246

My ladie bright, Creſeide, hath me betraide,
In whom I truſtid moſte of any wight;
She elliſwhere hath now her hert apaied;
The blisfull goddis thorough ther grete might
Have in my dreme iſhewid it full right;
Thus in my dreme Creſeide have I beholde,
And all this thing to Pandarus he tolde. 1253

O my Creſeide! alas! what ſubtilte,
What newè luſt, what beaute, what ſcience,
What wrathe of juſte cauſe have ye unto me?
What gilt of me, what fell experience,
Hath fro me rafte, alas! thine advertence?
O truſt! o faithe! quod he', o depe aſſurannce!
Who hath me rafte Creſeide, all my pleſaunce? 1260

Alas! why let I her from hennis go?
For whiche well nigh out of my wit I breide;
Who ſhall now trowe on any othis mo?
God wote I wende, o ladie bright Creſeide!
That every worde was goſpell that ye ſeide:
But who maie bet begile if that him liſt,
Than he on whom men wenin beſt to triſt? 1267

What ſhall I doen, my Pandarus? alas!
I felin now ſo ſharpe a newè pain,
Sens that there is no remedy' in this caas,
That bet were it I with mine hondis twain
My ſelvin ſlowe than alwaie thus to plain,
For through the deth my wo ſhuld have an ende,
There every daie with life my ſelf I ſhende. 1274

Pandare anſwerde and ſaid, Alas the while
That I was borne! Have I nat ſaied er this
That dremis many' a manir man begile?
And why? for folke expoundin 'hem amis:
How darſt thou ſain that falſe thy ladie is
For any dreme? right for thine owne drede
Let be this thought; thou canſt no dremis rede. 1281

Paravinture there thou dremeſt of this bore
It maie ſo be that it maie ſignifie
Her fathir, whiche that old is and eke hore,
Ayen the ſunne lyith on poinct to die,
And ſhe for ſorowe ginnith wepe and crie,
And kiſſith him, there he lieth on the ground;
Thus ſhuldiſt thou thy dreme aright expound. 1288

How might I than doin (quod Troilus)
To knowe of this, yea, were nevir ſo lite?
Now ſaieſt thou wiſely, (quod this Pandarus.)
My redy is this, ſens thou canſt well endite,
That haſtily a lettir thou her write,
Thorough which thou ſhalt wel bringin about
To knowe a ſoth of that thou art in dout. 1295

And ſe now why; for this I dare well ſain,
That if ſo is that ſhe untrue ybe
I can not trowe that ſhe woll write again;
And if ſhe write thou ſhalt full ſone iſe
As whethir ſhe hath any liberte
To come ayin, or ellis in ſome clauſe
If ſhe be let ſhe wol aſſigne a cauſe. 1302

Thou hast not writtin to her sens she went,
Nor she to the; and this I durst wele laie,
There maie soche cause ben in her entent
That hardily thou wolt thy selvin saie
That her abode the best is for you twaie:
Now write her than, and thou shalt selè sone
A soth of all; there is no more to done. 1309

Acordid ben to this conclusioun,
And that anon, these ilke lordis two,
And hastily sat Troilus adoun,
And rollith in his hertè to and fro
How he maie best discrivin her his wo,
And to Creseidè his owne ladie dere
He wrote right thus, and said as ye maie here. 1316

The copie of the letter.

Right fresh flour, whose I have aye ben and shall,
Withoutin part of elliswhere servise,
With herte and bodie, life, lust, thought, and all,
I wofull wight, in every humble wise
That tong can tell or hertè maie devise,
As oft as mattir occupyith place,
Me recommaunde unto your noble grace. 1323

Likith it you to wetin, swetè herte!
As ye well knowin, how long time agon
That ye me left in aspre painis smerte,
Whan that ye wentin, of whiche yet bote non
Have I non had, but evir worse bigon
Fro daie to daie am I, and so mote dwell
While it you list, of wele and wo my well. 1330

For whiche to you with dredefull hertè true
I write, as he that sorowe driveth to write,
My wo, that every houre encresith newe,
Complaining as I dare or can endite;
And that desacid is that maie ye wite
The teris which that from mine eyin rain,
That wuldin speke if that thei durst and plain. 1337

You first beseche I that your eyin clere
To loke on this defoulid ye nat hold,
And ore all this that ye my ladie dere
Woll vouchsafin this lettir to behold,
And by the cause eke of my caris cold,
That slaeth my wit, if aught amis me sterte
Foryevith it me, mine owne swetè herte! 1344

If any servaunt durst or ought of right
Upon his ladie pitously complain,
Than wene I that I ought to be that wight,
Considrid this, that ye these monthis twain
Have taried there ye saidin, sothe to sain,
But tenne dayis ye n'olde in hoste sojourne,
But in two monethis yet ye not retourne. 1351

But for as moche as me mote nedis like
All that you lift I dare nat planin more,
But humbly with sorowfull sighis sike
You write I mine unrestie sorowes sore,
Fro daie to daie desiring evirmore
To knowin fully, if your will it were,
How ye have fared and don while ye be there; 1358

The whose welfare and hele eke God encrese
In honour soche, that upward in degre
It growe alwaie, so that it nevir cese;
Right as your herte aie can, my ladie fre,
Devise, I praie to God so mote it be,
And graunt it that ye sone upon me rewe,
As wiselv as in all I'am to you true. 1365

And if you likith knowin of the fare
Of me, whose wo there maie no wight discrive,
I can no more, but chest of every care,
At writing of this lettir I'am on live,
All redy out my wofull ghost to drive,
Whiche I delaie and holde him yet in honde
Upon the sight of mattir of your sonde. 1372

Mine eyin two, in vain with whiche I se,
Of sorowfull teres salt arn woxin wellis,
My song in plaint of mine adversite,
My gode in harme, mine ese eke woxin hel is,
My joie in wo: I can sey now nought ellis
But tournid is, for whiche my life I warie,
Every joie or ese in his contrarie: 1379

Which with your coming home ayen to Troy
Ye maie redresse, and more a thousande sithe
Than er I had encressin in me joie,
For was there nevir hertè yet so blithe
To have his life as I shall ben as swithe
As I you se, and though no manir routhe
Can mevin you, yet thinkith on your trouthe. 1386

And if so be my gilt hath deth deserved,
Or if you list no more upon me se,
In guerdon yet of that I have you served
Besechè I you, mine ownè ladie fre,
That hereupon you wouldin write to me
For love of Jovis, my right lodè sterre,
That deth maie make an ende of al my werre. 1393

If othir cause aught doeth you for to dwel,
That with your lettir ye me recomfort,
For though to me your absence is an hell,
With pacience I woll my wo comfort,
And with your lettre' of hope I woll disport:
Now writith, swete! and let me thus nat plain;
With hope or deth deliverith me fro pain. 1400

Iwis, mine ownè derè hertè true!
I wote that whan ye next upon me se,
So lost have I mine hele and eke mine hewe,
Creseidè shall not conne tho knowin me;
Iwis, mine hert'is daie, my ladie fre!
So thurstith aie mine hertè to behold
Your beaute that unneth my life I hold. 1407

I saie no more, all have I for to sey
To you well more than that I tellin maie;
But whethir that ye doe me live or dey
Yet praie I God so yeve you right gode daie:
And farith well, thou godely faire freshe Maie!
As ye that life or deth me maie commaunde,
And to your trouth aie I me recommaunde, 1414

With helè ſoche, that but ye yevin me
The ſamin hele I ſhall non hele yhave:
In you licth, whan you liſt that it ſo be,
The daie in whiche me clothin ſhall my grave,
And in you my life, in you might to ſave
Me fro diſeſe of all my painis ſmerte: 1420
And farith now wele, myne own dere ſwete herte!

Le voſtre, T.

This lettir forthe was ſent unto Creſeide,
Of whiche her anſwere in effect was this;
Full pitouſly ſhe wrote ayen, and ſeide,
That all ſo ſonè as ſhe might iwis
She would come, and amende that was amis;
And, finally, ſhe wrote and ſayid then
She would ycome, ye, but ſhe n'iſt not when. 1428

But in her lettir madin ſhe ſoche feſtes
That wondir was, and ſwore ſhe loved him beſt,
Of whiche he found but botomles biheſtes.
But, Troilus, thou maieſt now eſt and weſt
Pipe in an ivie leſe if that the leſt:
Thus goth the world; God ſhild us fro miſchaunce,
And every wight that menith trouth avaunce! 1435

Encreſin gan the wo fro daie to night
Of Troilus for tarying of Creſeide,
And leſſin gan his hope and eke his might,
For whiche al doun he in his bedde him leide;
He ne ete, dronke, ne ſlept, ne wordè ſeide,
Imagining aie that ſhe was unkinde,
For which well nigh he wext out of his mind. 1442

This dreme of which I told have eke beforne
Maie nevir come out of his remembraunce;
He thought aie well he had his ladie lorn,
And that Jovis of his hie purveiaunce
Him shewed had in slepe the signifiaunce
Of her untrouth and his disavinture,
And that the bore was shewed him in figure; 1449

For whiche he for Sibylle his sustir sent,
That callid was Cassandre' eke all about,
And all his dreme he told her er he stent,
And her besought assoilin him the doubt
Of the strong bore with all his tuskis stout;
And, finally, within a litil stounde
Cassandra him gan thus his dreme expound. 1456

She gan first smile, and said, O brothir dere!
If thou a sothe of this desirest to knowe
Thou must a fewe of oldè stories here,
To purpose how that Fortune ovirthrowe
Hath lordis old, through which within a throw
Thou shalt this bore well know, and of what kinde
He comin is, as men in bokis finde. 1463

Diana, whiche that wrothe was and in ire,
For Grekis n'olde doin her sacrifice,
Ne encens on her altar set on fire,
She for that Grekis gon her so dispise
Ywrake her in a wondir cruill wise;
For with a bore as grete as oxe in stall
She made up frete ther corne and vinis all. 1470

To slea the bore was all the countrie reised,
Emongis whiche there came this borè to se
A maid, one of this worlde the best ipraised;
And Meleager, lorde of that countre,
He lovid so this freshè maidin fre,
That with his manhode er he wouldè stent
This bore he slough, and her the hed he sent. 1477

Of whiche, as oldè bokis tellin us,
There rose a conteke and a grete envie;
And of this lorde disendid Tydeus
By ligne, or ellis oldè bokis lie;
But how this Meleager gan to die,
Thorough his mothir, woll I you not tell,
For all to long it werin for to dwell. 1484

She tolde eke how Tydeus, er she stent,
Unto the strongè cite of Thebes
(To claimin kingdome of the cite) went
For his selawè Dan Polynices,
Of whiche the brothir Dan Eteocles
Full wrongfully of Thebis held the strength;
This toldè she by processe all by length. 1491

She tolde eke how Hemonides asterte
Whan Tydeus slongh fiftie knightis stoute;
She tolde eke all the prophesies by herte,
And how that sevin kingis with ther rout
Besiegedin the cite all aboute,
And of the holie serpent, and the well,
And of the Furies all, she gan him tell. 1498

Associat profugus Tydeus primo Polynicem,
Tydea legatum docet, insidiasque secundus,
Tertius Hæmoniden canit, & vatem latitantem,
Quartus habet Reges ineuntes prælia septem,
Lemniadum Furiæ quinto narrantur, & angues,
Archemori busum sexto, ludique leguntur,
Dat Thebis vatem Graiorum septimus umbris,
Octavo cecidit Tydeus, spes, vita Pelasgum,
Hippomedon nono moritur cum Parthenopæo,
Fulmine percussus decimo Capaneus superatur,
Undecimo sese perimunt per vulnera fratres,
Argivum flentem narrat duodenus, & ignem.

Of Archinorie's burying and the plaies,
And how Amphiaraus fill through the grounde,
How Tydeus was slain, Lorde of Argeies,
And how Hipome'don in a litil stounde
Was dreint, and dedde Parthenope of wound,
And also how Capanēus the proude
With thonder dint was slain, that cryid loude. 1505

She gan eke tell him how that eithir brother,
Eteocles and Polynice also,
At a scarmishe eche of 'hem slough the other,
And of Argivis weping and ther mo,
And how the toun was brent she told eke tho;
And tho discendid doune from jestis old
To Diomede, and thus she spake and told: 1510

This ilkè bore betokenith Diomede,
Tydeus sonne, that doune discendid is
Fro Mele'ager, that made the bore to blede,
And thy ladie, where so she be iwis,
This Diomede her herte hath and she his:
Wepe if thou wolt or leve, for out of dout
This Diomede is in and thou art out. 1519

Thou saiest nat sothe, (quod he) thou sorceresse,
With all thy falsè ghost of prophecie;
Thou wenist ben a grete devineresse,
Now seest thou nat this sole of fantasie
Painin her upon ladies for to lie:
Awaie, (quod he) there Jovis yeve the sorowe!
Thou shalt be fals para'venture er to morow. 1526

As well thou mightist lien on gode Alceste,
That was of all creturis (but men lie)
That evir werin kindist and the beste,
For whan her husbonde was in jeopardie
To die himself, but if she wouldè die,
She chese for him to die and gon to hell,
And starse anon, as us the bokis tell. 1533

Cassandre goeth; and he with cruill herte
Foryate his wo for angre of her speche,
And fro his hedde all sodainly he sterte,
As though all whole him had imade a leche,
And daie by daie he gan enquire and seche
A sothe of this with all his besy cure;
And thus he drivith forthe his avinture. 1540

Fortune, whiche that the permutacion
Of all thinges hath, as it is her committed
Through purveiaunce and disposicion
Of high Jove, as reignis shall ben yflitted
Fro folk to folk, or whan thei shal ben smitted,
Gan pull awaie the fethirs bright of Troie
Fro daie to daie, till thei ben bare of joie. 1547

Emong all this the fine of the' jeopardie
Of Hector gan approchin wondir blive,
The Fatis would his soule should unbodie,
And shapin had a mene it out to drive,
Ayenst whiche fate him helpith not to strive,
But on a daie to fightin gan he wende,
At whiche, alas! he caught his liv'is ende: 1554

For whiche me thinkith every manir wight
That hauntith armis oughtin to bewaile
The deth of him that was so noble' a knight,
For as he drough a king by th' aventaile,
Unware of this Achilles through the maile
And through the bodie gan him for to rive,
And thus the worthy knight was reft of live; 1561

For whom, as oldè bokis tellin us,
Was máde soch wo that tong it maie nat tel,
And namily the sorowe' of Troilus,
That next him was of worthinesse the well,
And in this wo gan Troilus to dwell,
That what for sorowe, love, and for unrest,
Full oft a daie he bad his hertè brest. 1568

But nathèlesse though he gon him dispaire,
And drede aie that his ladie was untrue,
Yet aie on her his hertè gan repaire,
And, as these lovirs doen, he sought aie newe
To get ayen Creseidè bright of hewe,
And in his herte he went her excusing,
That Calchas causid all her tarying. 1575

And oftin time he was in purpose grete
Him selvin like a pilgrim to disgise,
To sene her; but he maie not counterfete
To ben unknowen of folke that werin wise,
Ne finde excuse aright that maie suffice,
If he among the Grekis knowin were,
For whiche he wept full oft many a tere. 1582

To her he wrote yet oftin time all newe
Full pitously, he left it nat for slouthe,
Beseching her, sithins that he was true,
That she would come ayen and hold her trouth:
For whiche Creseide upon a daie for routh,
I take it so, touching all this mattere
Wrote him ayen, and saied as ye maie here: 1589

Cupid'is sonne, ensample' of godelihede,
O swerde of knighthode, sours of gentilnesse!
How might a wight in turment and in drede,
And heleleſſe, you sendin as yet gladnesse?
I hertilesse, I sicke, I in distresse,
Sens ye with me nor I with you maie dele,
You neithir sende I maie ne herte ne hele. 1596

Your lettirs full the papir all iplainted
Commevid havin myne hert'is pite;
I have eke sene with teris all depainted
Your lettir, and how ye requirin me
To come ayen, whiche yet ne maie not be,
But why, lest that this lettir foundin were,
No mencioun ne make I now for fere. 1603

Grevous to me (God wote) is your unrest,
Your hast, and that the goddis ordinaunce
It semith nat ye take it for the best,
Nor othir thing n'is in your remembraunce,
As thinkith me, but onely your plesaunce;
But beth nat wroth, and that I you beseche,
For that I tarie' is all for wickid speche: 1610

For I have herd well morè than I wend
Touching us two how thingis have istond,
Whiche I shall with dissimuling amende;
And beth not wroth, I have eke undirstond
How ye ne doe but holdin me in honde;
But now no force; I can nat in you gesse
But allè trouthe and allè gentilnesse. 1617

Comin I woll, but yet in soche disjointe
I stond as now, that what yere or what daie
That this shall be that can I nat apointe;
But in effect I praie you as I maie
Of your gode worde and of your frendship aie,
For truily while that my life maie dure
As for a freude ye maie in me assure. 1624

Yet praie I you on evill ye ne take
That it is ſhort whiche that I to you write;
I dare nat there I am well lettirs make,
Ne nevir yet ne could I well endite;
Eke grete effect men writin in place lite;
Th' entent is all, and nat the lettirs ſpace:
And farith well; God have you in his grace! 1631

Le voſtre, C.

This Troilus thought this lettir al ſtraunge
Whan he it ſawe, and ſoroufully he ſight;
Him thought it like a kalendes of eſchaunge;
But, finally, he ful ne trowin might
That ſhe ne would him holdin that ſhe hight,
For with ful evill wil liſte him to leve
That lovith wel, in ſuch caſe, though him greve. 1638

But nathèleſſe men ſain that at the laſt
For any thing men ſhal the ſothè ſe,
And ſuche a caſe betide, and that as faſt,
That Troilus wel underſtode that ſhe
N'as nat ſo kinde as that her ought to be;
And, finally, he wote now out of dout
That al is loſt that he hath ben about. 1645

Stode on a daie in his melancolie
This Troilus, and in ſuſpectioun
Of her for whom he wenid for to die,
And ſo befil that throughout Troiè toun,
As was the gife, iborne was up and doun
A manir cote armoure, as ſaithe the ſtorie,
Beforn Deiphobe, in ſigne of his victorie; 1652

The whichè cote, as tellith Lollius,
Deiphobe it had yrente fro Diomede
The ſamè daie; and when this Troilus
It ſawe he gan to takin of it hede,
Aviſing of the length and of the brede,
And al the werke, but as he gan beholde
Ful ſodainly his herte began to colde, 1659

As he that on the coler fonde within
A broche that he Creſeidè yave at morow
That ſhe from Troiè toune muſt nedis twin
In remembraunce of him and of his ſorow,
And ſhe him laide ayen her faith to borow
To kepe it aie; but now ful wel he wiſt
His lady n'as no longir on to triſt. 1666

He goeth him home, and gan ful ſone ſende
For Pandarus, and al this newè chaunce
And of this broch he tolde him orde and ende,
Complaining of her hert'is variaunce,
His longè love, his trouth, and his penaunce;
And aftir Deth, withoutin wordis more,
Ful faſt he cried, his reſt him to reſtore. 1673

Than ſpake he thus; O lady mine, Creſeide!
Where is your faith, and where is your beheſt?
Where is your love? where is your trouth? he ſeide;
Of Diomede have ye now al this feſt?
Alas! I would have trowid at the leſt
That ſens ye n'olde in trouthè to me ſtonde
That ye thus n'olde have holdin me in honde. 1680

Who shal now trowen on any othis mo?
Alas! I never would have wende er this
That ye, Creseidè, coulde have chaungid so,
Ne but I had agilte and done amis;
So cruel wende I nat your herte iwis
To slee me thus; alas! your name of trouthe
Is now fordone, and that is al my routhe. 1687

Was there none othir broche you list to lete
To sesse with your newè love, (quod he)
But thilkè broche that I with teris wete
You yave as for a remembraunce of me?
None other cause, alas! ne haddin ye
But for dispite, and eke for that ye mente
All uttirly to shewin your entente: 1694

Through which I se that clene out of your minde
Ye have me cast, and I ne can nor maie
For al this world within mine hertè findè
To' unlovin you a quartir of a daie;
In cursid time I borne was, welawaie!
That you that done me all this wo endure
Yet love I the best of any creture. 1701

Now God (quod he) me sendin yet the grace
That I maie metin with this Diomede,
And truily if I have might and space
Yet shal I make I hope his sidis blede:
Now God (quod he) that aughtist takin hede
To forthrin trouthe, and wrongis to punice,
Why n'ilt thou don a vengeaunce of this vice? 1708

O Pandarus! that in dremes for to triste
Me blamid hast, and wonte art oft upbreide,
Now maist thou sene thy selfe, if that the list,
How trewe is now thy necè bright Creseide:
In sondry formis, (God it wote) he seide,
The goddis shewin bothè joie and tene
In slepe, and by my dreme it is now sene. 1715

And certainly, withoutin morè speche,
From hennis forthe, as ferforthe as I maie,
Mine owne deth in armis wol I seche,
I ne retche nat how sonè be the daie;
But trewily, Creseidè, swetè Maie!
Whom I have ay with al my might iserved,
That ye thus done I have it nat deserved. 1722

This Pandarus, that al these thingis herde,
And wiste wel that he said a sothe of this,
He nat a worde ayen to him answerde,
For sory of his frend'is sorow' he is,
And shamid for his nece hath done amis,
And stante astonied of these causis twaie
As stil as stone; o worde ne coulde he saie. 1729

But at the last thus he yspake and seide:
My brothir dere! I may do the no more;
What should I saine? I hate iwis Creseide,
And God it wote I wol hate her er-more;
And that thou me besoughtist don of yore,
Having unto mine honour ne my reste
Right no regarde, I did al that the leste. 1736

Yf I did aught which that might likin the
It is me lese, and of this treson now
God wote that it a sorow is to me,
And dredelesse, for hert'is ese of you,
Right faine I would amende it wist I how,
And fro this world Almighty God I praie,
Delivir her sone! I can no more saie. 1743

Great was the woe and plaint of Troilus,
But forthe her course Fortune aie gan to holde,
Crescide lovith the sonne of Tydeus,
And Troilus mote wepe in caris colde:
Such is this worlde, who so it can beholde;
In eche estate is litill hert'is reste;
God leve us to takin it for the beste! 1750

In many cruil bataile, out of drede,
Of Troilus this ilkè noble knight
(As men maie in these oldè bokis rede)
Was sene his knighthod and his gretè might,
And dredèlesse his irè daie and night
Ful cruilly the Grekis aie abought,
And alwaie most this Diomede he sought. 1757

And oftin timis I finde that thei mette
With blody strokis and with wordis grete,
Assaying how ther speris werin whette;
And God it wote with many'a cruil hete
Gan Troilus upon his helme to bete:
But nathèlesse Fortune it naught ne would
Of eithir's honde that eithir dyin should. 1764

And if I had itakin for to write
The armis of this ilkè worthy man,
Than would I of his battailis endite;
But for that I to writin first began
Of his love, I have saidin as I can
His worthy dedis, who so liste 'hem here,
Rede Dares, he can tel 'hem al ifere. 1771

Beseching every lady bright of hewe,
And every gentil woman, what she be,
Al be it that Creseidè was untrewe,
That for that gilt ye be nat wroth with me,
Ye maie her gilte in othir bokis se;
And gladdir I would writin if you leste
Of Penepole's trouth and gode Alceste. 1778

Ne saie I nat this al only for men,
But most for women that betrayid be
Through fals folke, God yeve 'hem sorow, *Amen!*
That with ther gretè witte and subtilte
Betrayin you, and this commevith me
To speke; and in effecte you al I praie
Beth ware of men, and herkenith what I saie: 1785

Go, litil boke, go litill tragedie,
There God my makir yet er that I die
So sende me might to make some comedie;
But, litill boke, make thou the none envie,
But subject ben unto al poesie,
And kisse the steppes wher as thou seist pace
Of Virgil, Ovide, Homer, Lucan, Stace. 1792

And for there is so grete diversite
In English, and in writing of our tonge,
So praie I to God that none mifwrite the,
Ne the misse-metre for defaute of tonge;
And redde where so thou be or ellis songe
That thou be undirstonde God I beseche;
But yet to purpose of my rathir speche. 1799

The wrathe, as I began you for to seie,
Of Troilus the Grekis boughtin dere,
For thousandis his hondis madin deye,
As he that was withoutin any pere,
Save in his time Hector, as I can here;
But welawaie! (save onely Godd'is wil)
Dispitously him slough the fierse Achil. 1806

And whan that he was slain in this manere
His lightè goste ful blisfully is went
Up to the' holownesse of the seventh sphere,
In his place leting everiche element,
And there he sawe, with ful avisement,
The erratike sterres, herkening harmonie,
With sownis ful of hevins melodie. 1813

And doun from thennis fast he gan avise
This litil spotte of erth that with the se
Enbracid is, and fully gan dispise
This wretchid world, and helde al vanite
In respecte of the plaine felicite
That is in heven above, and at the last
There he was slaine his loking doun he cast. 1820

And in him selfe he lough right at the wo
Of them that weptin for his dethe so fast,
And dampnid all our werkes, that foloweth so
The blindè lust whiche that ne may nat last,
And shuldin al our herte on hevin cast;
And forthe he went, shortily for to tell,
There as Mercury sortid him to dwel. 1827

Suche fine hath, lo! this Troilus for love,
Suche fine hath all his gretè worthinesse,
Suche fine hath his estate royal above,
Suche fine his lust, such fine hath his noblesse,
Suche fine hath this falsè world'is brotilnesse!
And thus began his loving of Creseide
As I have tolde, and in this wise he deide. 1834

O yonge and freshè folkis, he or she!
In whiche that love up growith with your age,
Repairith home from worldely vanite,
And of your hertes up eastith the visage
To thilkè God that aftir his image
You made, and thinkith al n'is but a faire,
This world that passith sone, as flouris faire: 1841

And lovith him the whiche that right for love
Upon a crosse, our soulis for to bey,
First starfe and rose, and sit in heven above,
For he n'il falsin no wight, dare I sey,
That wol his hert al wholly on him ley;
And sens he best to love is and most meke
What nedith fainid lovis for to seke? 1848

Lo! here of Painims curſid oldè rites!
Lo! here what al ther goddis maie availe!
Lo! here this wretchid world'is appetites!
Lo! here the fine and guerdon for travaile
Of Jove, Apollo, Mars, and ſuch raſkaile!
Lo! here the forme of oldè clerkis ſpeche
In poetrie, if ye ther bokis ſeche! 1855

O, moral Gower! this Boke I directe
To the and to the philoſophicall Strode,
To vouchſafe there nede is for to correcte
Of your benignities and zelis gode;
And to the ſothfaſt Chriſt, that ſtarfe on rode,
With al mine hert of mercy er I praie,
And to the Lorde right thus I ſpeke and ſaie: 1862

Thou One, and Two, and Thre! eterne on live,
That raigniſt aie in Thre, and Two, and One!
Uncircumſcript, and all maiſt circumſcrive,
From viſible and inviſible fone
Defende us in thy mercy everichone!
So make us, Jeſus, to thy mercy digne,
For love of maide and mothir thine benigne! 1869

Thus endeth the fifth boke and laſt of Troilus.

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